

Kayhan: Zionists in Basel Assad's death

TEHRAN (AFP) — An Iranian newspaper on Sunday accused the Israeli and U.S. intelligence services of masterminding the car crash in which Syrian President Hafez Al Assad's eldest son, Basil, was killed. "The Zionists are too anxious to deal with a Syria without another Hafez Al Assad. So the incident raises many questions," said the daily Kayhan. "We cannot exclude a role here for U.S. and Israeli agents." The newspaper said Basil was the most appropriate replacement for his father and Syria's "only hope" to continue the "tough political heritage" of Hafez Al Assad, who has ruled the country for 24 years. The paper added that Basil was his father's confidant, often chosen to launch secret negotiations on Hafez Al Assad's behalf, particularly with the Lebanese group Hizbollah. Basil's death came less than a week after Mr. Assad and U.S. President Bill Clinton held a summit meeting in Geneva in a bid to revive the Arab-Israeli peace process, which Iran fiercely opposes. In a condolence message to Assad Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani described Basil's death as a "tragic event."

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Team in S. Africa

AMMAN (Petra) — A Jordanian delegation headed by Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi arrived Sunday in Johannesburg on a week-long visit to South Africa. Mr. Lawzi will deliver letters from His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, to South African President F.W. de Klerk and African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela. The delegation will meet with South African officials and religious leaders for talks on enhancing political, economic and cultural cooperation between the two countries.

Beirut row kills schoolbus driver

BEIRUT (AP) — A schoolbus driver has been shot dead in front of his young passengers in an argument with a motorist over the right of passage at a road intersection north of Beirut. Friday's shooting near Dog River, 16 kilometres from the capital, underlined the unrelenting on Lebanese roads, where traffic lights, damaged or stolen during the 1975-90 civil war, have yet to be reoperated. Police said two buses were ferrying students of the St. Joseph School when they locked horns at a road intersection with a car driven by a man named Simon Teress. After a shouting match that included an exchange of insults, Mr. Teress pulled a pistol and fatally shot one of the bus drivers in the head. The victim, Tanious Fahd, went down in a pool of blood in front of "weeping and shouting" students who included his son, according to the police report. Mr. Teress sped away after threatening passerby with his pistol. But he was arrested in Beirut the next day.

Kuwait may give more right to vote

KUWAIT (R) — The Kuwaiti government gave its initial approval to a law that would allow more Kuwaiti men to vote or run as candidates in general elections, the official Kuwaiti News Agency (KUNA) reported on Sunday. "The cabinet reviewed the proposed law and ... decided to approve it in principle," KUNA quoted Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Abdul Aziz Al Dakhlil as saying after a weekly cabinet meeting. He said the proposed law would allow men born after their fathers' acquired Kuwaiti nationality to vote and run for election. Now, only Kuwaiti men over 21 who can trace their family roots in the emirate before 1920 are eligible to vote.

India protests Clinton comments

NEW DELHI (AP) — The Indian Foreign Ministry Sunday protested U.S. President Bill Clinton's statement on the Sikh insurgency in Punjab, saying it "could have a negative impact on bilateral relations." Mr. Clinton said in a letter to Representative Gary Condit that he favours a peaceful solution to the fighting that protects Sikh rights. The letter was released to reporters Friday in Washington by the U.S.-based Council of Khalistan, a separatist lobby group. Mr. Condit had written to Mr. Clinton asking for an active U.S. role in solving the insurgency in the northern state of Punjab. The Indian ambassador in Washington, Sidhartha Shanker Ray, has been asked to meet U.S. officials to convey India's reaction.

32 massacred in Colombia

BOGOTA (AP) — Gunmen believed to be leftist guerrillas fired automatic weapons at a gathering of political rivals in northwest Colombia early Sunday, killing at least 32 people, authorities said. The massacre in the town of Apartado, 500 kilometres northwest of Bogota, was the bloodiest in Colombia in more than five years. Eight other people were wounded. About 200 people have been killed in political violence during the past year in the Apartado region.

Peace talks resume today amid mixed signals

Israel says accord with PLO is close; Rabin calls for Assad summit; Syria sees fresh chance

Combined agency dispatches

WASHINGTON — Arab and Israeli negotiators are scheduled to renew peace talks Monday in one-on-one meetings away from the media. The chief negotiators for Syria, Lebanon and Jordan were due to meet their Israeli counterparts in undisclosed locations in Washington while a lower level Palestinian team will also hold talks with Israelis.

U.S. officials said Friday the death of Syrian President Hafez Al Assad's son in a car crash was not expected to delay the talks. As participants prepared to talk in Washington, there were statements of optimism and obstacles from the Middle East.

— Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Sunday he and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat were "plenty close" to breaking a deadlock in implementing their peace accord. "I think we are plenty close to an agreement but I prefer at

this time not to enter into details," Mr. Peres said. "Things that they said no to yesterday, they say require study today."

Mr. Peres and Mr. Arafat said they would meet again in Switzerland next Sunday. — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said he saw results in Palestinian-Israeli peace talks and called on President Assad to meet him "anyplace on earth."

Mr. Rabin said the meeting between Mr. Peres and Mr. Arafat would yield some progress in implementing the already delayed plan for Palestinian self-rule in the occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

"I think that Israel's clarification and clear stand on security issues are starting to have results," Mr. Rabin told reporters. "There is still no agreement around some of the security matters, but I hope that in time ... we will progress."

A dispute over control of border crossings is the main bone of contention. The

Israelis are demanding a veto on Palestinians entering the autonomous zone, while the PLO do not want any visible Israeli presence as it would infringe on their sovereignty.

According to Israeli media, Mr. Peres offered to let the Palestinians have sole control over the terminals, with Israeli monitoring through electronic surveillance. The crossing from Jordan to Israel would remain in Israeli hands. Mr. Peres also offered the Palestinians a joint tourist site on the shores of the Dead Sea.

"I got the impression that (Arafat) wants to deliver the goods and complete the agreement," Mr. Peres said.

A dispute persists over the size of Jericho. Mr. Peres and Mr. Arafat are to take up their differences again during a conference of international leaders at Daos, Switzerland.

Yossi Beilin, deputy foreign minister and architect of the deal with the PLO, said Sunday the agreement would be violated if the Palestinians declared a state in Gaza and Jericho.

"It's very simple," Mr. Beilin said. "Once they decide unilaterally about a Palestinian state, there won't be a continuation of the process and there won't be a permanent solution."

Mr. Beilin said, adding the Palestinians were fully aware of the ramifications and were not about to risk it.

Meanwhile, Israeli and Palestinian negotiators are to resume talks Monday in the Egyptian resort of Tabu on other security and civilian matters holding up the transfer of control in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

According to Israel Radio, Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres agreed on several points.

Israel will keep control of crossing points between the Gaza Strip and Egypt and between the West Bank and Jordan, it said. The PLO agreed that no Palestinian policemen would be on the bridge to Jordan but Palestinians travelling to Jericho would not be subjected to Israeli identity checks.

Israel also reportedly accepted that Jericho would

enjoy the status of "capital" of Palestinian self-rule areas.

But there was no settlement on the size of the Jericho region, the radio added. Israel wants it to be 60 square kilometres while the PLO wants an area at least three times larger.

The radio also said the Palestinian part of the Arab-Israeli negotiations to resume Monday in Washington will focus on elections to an autonomy council which are to take place in July under the autonomy accord.

In Tabu, where talks on implementing autonomy have been underway since October, the negotiations will focus on the transfer of powers to the Palestinians, the radio said.

On Saturday, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher held separate breakfast talks with Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres and urged the two sides to resolve their differences.

In the meantime, the Israeli army is preparing for the possibility of a failure in the peace talks and possible return to hostilities, said deputy chief of

Egyptian group assails militants

CAIRO (R) — Egypt's leading human rights organisation said on Sunday that militants in 1993 bore a much larger share of the responsibility for deaths through political violence than in 1992. The Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights said in a report that while the security forces had largely abandoned the practice of assassinating militants, the militants themselves had taken to killing policemen in much greater numbers. "The acts of violence and terrorism which some of the political Islam groups practice saw a grave development in that they modernised their techniques, using explosive devices, car bombs and time bombs," it added. "Some of the political Islam groups set about expanding... their terrorist operations without the least concern that this would result in the killing of more innocent victims," it said. The organisation, which is independent and often hostile to the government, said 207 people died in political violence in Egypt in 1993, compared with 77 in 1992. It said the militants killed 137 people, including 90 policemen, two foreign tourists and 45 Egyptian civilians. Six of the civilians were Christians.

Musa due in Israel

EGYPTIAN Foreign Minister Amr Musa will make a brief trip to Israel Monday to talk to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Mr. Rabin's spokesman said Sunday. Spokesman Gad Ben-Ari said the talks would be on Middle East issues but gave no further details. He said Musa was also expected to meet Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

staff Amnon Shahak.

"There is a need to continue to maintain a large army that is ready for possibilities of war," he said on Israel Radio.

Speaking before a group of American rabbis, Mr. Rabin was asked if he would meet with President Assad personally to make peace.

"I believe that such proposals were made 10 times. I am ready to meet President Assad in Damascus, in Jerusalem, in any place on earth, in which we can meet to negotiate," Mr. Rabin said.

"I don't put conditions to the meeting and I am not ready to accept conditions for such a meeting beyond what we are committed (to)," Mr. Rabin said.

Mr. Arafat briefed Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on attempts to break the deadlock over Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho area.

Mr. Arafat told reporters on arrival in Cairo: "There are many obstacles that have prevented implementation of this agreement. We expect that talks will continue in order to find new methods to remove these obstacles."

The idea of the private Washington talks is that away from the public eye, negotiators will feel less compelled to stick to entrenched positions and more at liberty to explore possible areas of compromise.

The key is expected to be the Syrian-Israeli talks, the first between the two sides since last September when negotiations were suspended after the disclosure that Israel had

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House schedules urgent talks on Malhas' comments on food and medicine situation

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Spokesmen and presidents of parliamentary blocs and committees today hold a "crucial meeting" to study allegations by Minister of Health Abdul Rahim Malhas that a good quantity of food and medicine sold in the country do not meet standards and specifications. Acting Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Razzag Tubeishat called the meeting after some deputies demanded that the House hold an emergency session to discuss the minister's statements that first appeared in a weekly tabloid Thursday.

About 30 other deputies demanded that the House hold a general discussion of the government's regulations on the entry of food and medicine to the market.

Dr. Tubeishat told the Jordan Times Sunday that the meeting would agree on the steps that the House would take to investigate the minister's allegations and whether an extraordinary session will be held. He said the issue would be on the agenda of the house when it meets Wednesday.

Parliamentary sources said

the House was divided on whether a parliamentary investigation committee should be set up to look into the minister's statements that appeared in a lengthy interview in Shihaan Arabic-language weekly.

The sources said that some deputies wanted to hear the government's response to the minister's statements before a course of action is decided, with some arguing that the issue should be handled by the judiciary.

"The issues addressed by the minister, if proven true, means that the health of people is in grave danger. They point to real financial, administrative and political corruption that require the government to take immediate, firm and fundamental measures. They also require that the representatives of the nation support the minister," said 30 deputies in a request to hold a special session to discuss the minister's allegations.

Dr. Malhas told the Jordan Times Friday that there was a deficiency in laws governing the sale of food and medicine in the market, pointing to the need of laws that would protect consumers. He charged that a "mafia"

of food and drugs merchants were violating the few existing laws that regulate the distribution of food and medicine. He said these merchants were resisting the new regulations the Ministry of Health has introduced to ensure that food and drugs sold in the market meet certain standards and specifications.

Shihaan quoted Dr. Malhas as saying that a good quantity of food and medicine that reach the market "is the garbage of the industrialised world and is unfit for human consumption."

But Dr. Malhas told the Jordan Times Friday that the weekly "blew (his remarks) out of proportion." He said Shihaan "sensationalised" his statements.

President of Pharmacists Union Hussameddin Mesmar Sunday denounced the minister's allegations and urged the government and the House to investigate remarks he made "against pharmacists."

In a front-page newspaper advertisement, Mr. Mesmar sought to assure people about the safety and efficiency of drugs sold in the country.

Mr. Mesmar, a former director at the pharmacy and medicine control directorate

at the Ministry of Health, said the directorate examines and registers all drugs before they go into the market.

Dr. Malhas told the Jordan Times that some of the ministry officials who are supposed to inspect drugs are pharmacists who own private pharmacies, pointing to a conflict of interest.

Former Minister of Health and serving Deputy Mohammad Adoub Al Zaben said that all drugs that go to the market were examined by specialised committees at the Ministry of Health.

"The Ministry of Health is a scientific institution and it can never allow the importation of medicines unless they meet certain specifications," said Dr. Zaben.

Dr. Zaben said Dr. Malhas should have asked Parliament or the government to initiate laws if he saw a need for such laws.

The pharmacy and drug control directorate was established in the early 1980s by the then minister of health, Dr. Zubair Malhas.

Conflict between the ministry and the pharmacists' union goes back to 1987 when Zeid Hamzeh, then minister

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Majali says U.S. is playing honest and constructive role

DOHA (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali said Sunday His Majesty King Hussein's discussion this week with the U.S. administration focussed on the peace process with all its dimensions, aspects and tracks.

The King stressed Jordan's firm commitment to a comprehensive, just and durable solution based on United Nations resolutions, Dr. Majali said.

In a telephone interview with the Qatari daily Al Raya from Washington, Dr. Majali said that consultations between Jordan and Syria and all other Arab parties are based on the search for a comprehensive solution in line with resolutions, international legitimacy and the land-in-exchange-for-peace principle.

Dr. Majali described the

U.S. role in the Arab-Israeli peace talks as active and positive, and said the U.S. administration headed by President Bill Clinton, was playing the role of an honest mediator.

Dr. Majali voiced satisfaction with the latest accord between Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), saying that coordination in all fields was continuing. He added that specialised joint coordination teams would be meeting soon in Amman and would submit reports about their meetings to the Higher Joint-Jordanian-Palestinian Committee.

On future Jordanian-Palestinian relations, Dr. Majali said: "It is up to the two people to find the proper formula which can achieve their national objectives, aspirations and common interests."

Dr. Majali said Jordan had been making sincere and honest efforts to maintain close relations with the Arab states in the Gulf. Jordan has succeeded in restoring good brotherly relations with Qatar and the United Arab Emirates in addition to Oman, with whom Jordan has always maintained close relations, Dr. Majali said. He voiced hope that relations would develop positively and expand in scope to cover other countries. He stressed that Arab relations were interactive and that factors of "accord and reconciliation" were bigger than those of "division and enmity."

Dr. Majali welcomed the national reconciliation agreement among the Yemeni parties to end the political crisis in Yemen.

Iraqi dinar rises

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — The Iraqi dinar rose on Sunday following calls by a newspaper published by President Saddam Hussein's eldest son for a crackdown on the "loathsome faces" of Baghdad's thriving moneychangers.

The dollar stood at 170 dinars, down from 190 Saturday. The influential newspaper Babel, published by President Saddam's son Uday, on Saturday urged Iraq's security forces to intervene to halt a collapse in the dinar last week.

Babel accused Iraq's moneychangers, whose activities went on almost uninterrupted by the government for some time, of being a "threat to national security."

A television station owned by Uday interviewed several moneychangers Friday night who said market forces were the reason for the falling dinar.

But Babel lashed out at them and said: "The viewers seeing faces of the people (moneychangers) appearing on Youth Television yesterday saw loathsome faces of a group of butchers with no concern but swift profits."

Moneychangers had abandoned their quarters in Harethiya in Baghdad Sunday. Baghdad's official press backed Babel's call on the security forces to intervene.

The ruling Baath Party newspaper Al Thawra said moneychangers needed "a re-

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Arafat in flurry of Mideast contacts

PLO leader briefs Mubarak, visits Assad, due in S. Arabia

Combined agency dispatches

DAMASCUS — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat on Sunday held a flurry of contacts with Arab leaders, including a visit to Syria where he offered his condolences to President Hafez Al Assad on the death of his eldest son, Basil, killed in a car crash two days ago. Palestinian officials said.

They said Mr. Arafat met Mr. Assad at Qadaha, the Syrian leader's birthplace where Basil, 32, was buried on Saturday.

Mr. Arafat, who last visited Syria in September before the signing of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO)-Israel peace accord, was expected to fly back to Cairo shortly, the officials said.

Syria's ties with the PLO were strained by the secretly negotiated peace agreement which Damascus strongly criticised.

Syria later softened its stance when it joined Gulf Arab states and Egypt in describing it as a step that should be followed by measures to



Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat (left) shakes hands with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon

Peres as acting Norwegian Foreign Minister Bjoern Tore Godal looks on late Saturday after their talks in Oslo (AFP photo)

make a comprehensive peace in the region.

Mr. Arafat made the stopover in Syria on his way to Saudi Arabia for his first visit to the kingdom since relations were

ruptured three years ago because of the PLO's pro-Iraq stance in the Gulf war.

Mr. Assad and Mr. Arafat were not expected to talk politics at their meeting.

Earlier Sunday, Mr. Arafat met with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Cairo to discuss ways of speeding up

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Tribunal needed for Hague Pan Am trial

THE HAGUE (R) — A special court in the style of the Yugoslavia war crimes tribunal will have to be created if two Libyans suspected of blowing up a U.S. plane over Scotland are to be tried in the Hague, a legal expert said Sunday.

Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi said Saturday that a trial in the Hague could resolve the dispute with the West over the 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103, which killed 270 people.

"Under the World Court regime such a trial is not possible. So they should create something new — like the Yugoslavia war crimes tribunal — for that case," said Rob

Court could try the men if Libya intervened on their behalf, Ms. Erian said.

"If Libya takes up the cause of the (suspects), another state has to take up the cause of the plaintiffs," she said.

But Mr. Siekmann said such an action, unprecedented in the World Court's history, would be difficult to formulate, as any sentence would have to be handed down to individuals rather than states.

Libya cuts budget

Libya has sharply cut its budget forecast for 1994 because of difficulties caused by U.N. sanctions, its prime minister said Sunday.

The cut amounts to several billions (dollars), Mr. Abouzid Omar Dourdash told reporters after the commission of the general people's congress adopted the draft budget.

Figures for the new budget were not made available. "As a result of the unjust U.N. sanctions we have been forced to cut our expenses in several domains like education and health," said Mr. Dourdash, whose official title is secretary of the general popular committees.

The budget was set in such a way that Libya would rely less on oil, its main source of revenue, he said.

The U.N. imposed sanctions on Libya because of its refusal to hand over for trial the two suspected of carrying out the Pan Am bombing.

The measures were tightened in December to include a freeze of Libyan assets and a ban on imports of certain oil equipment.

A full embargo on oil is not excluded for the future and diplomats believe Libya may be preparing itself for such an option.

Mr. Dourdash said Libya has secured part of its assets abroad before the freeze but he gave no figures.

"Our assets abroad amount to several billions of dollars and we did all what we could do to protect them," he said. The West aimed to turn Libya into a debtor nation, he said.

The commission also approved the early return of thousands of students studying abroad on government scholarships in order to reduce foreign currency spending.



UNDER FIRE: An Uzbek soldier to warlord Abdul Rashid Dostum leaps off an armoured personal carrier after coming under attack from forces loyal to President Burhanuddin Rabbani during fighting in Kabul (AFP photo)

Denktash said ready to cooperate with U.N.

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş is ready to cooperate with the U.N. chief and resume inter-communal talks with Greek-Cypriot Claficos Clerides, the Turkish-Cypriot Tak news agency reported Saturday.

In a letter to U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali released Saturday, Mr. Denktaş also said he had resumed his duties as negotiator at the U.N.-sponsored talks aimed at resolving the Cyprus problem.

Mr. Denktaş, president of the self-proclaimed Turkish republic of northern Cyprus (TRNC) — declared in 1983 and recognised only by Ankara — quit as negotiator for the Turkish-Cypriot community in July 1993 due to differences with his prime minister at the time, Dervish Eroglu.

In his letter, Mr. Denktaş repeated that it would be useful to resume the inter-communal discussions in Nicosia, the divided capital of Cyprus, rather than in New York, adding that the Turkish side placed great importance on security matters.

The TRNC's new coalition government, formed after parliamentary elections on Dec. 12, agreed Thursday to resume talks with the Greek-Cypriots on a package of confidence-building measures proposed by the United Nations.

The Turkish-Cypriot side agrees to return to the talks with "no pre-conditions" after a break of several months, Mr. Denktaş said, adding that they "insist on certain principles."

But the president of the divided island, Mr. Clerides, reacted with scepticism, insisting the Turkish-Cypriots clarify their stand.

"Denktash must state clearly whether he still insists on recognition of his pseudo-state and of the sea and air ports," he told Cypriot radio.

"Otherwise the Greek-Cypriots will not be prepared to resume the dialogue," warned Mr. Clerides.

The confidence-building measures call for Nicosia airport, closed for two decades, to be reopened and for the Turkish-Cypriots to hand over to the United Nations part of the coastal city of Famagusta.

Turkish troops invaded the north of Cyprus in 1974 in the wake of a short-lived coup in Nicosia engineered by the right-wing junta then ruling Greece.

In New York, a U.N. spokesman said Thursday that Dr. Ghali's special representative, Joe Clark, would embark Saturday on a week-long tour of Nicosia, Athens and Ankara.

In anticipation of Mr. Clark's visit to the region, Deputy Special Representative Gustave Feissel resumed discussions earlier this month with the leaders of the two communities, the spokesman said.



Rauf Denktaş



Claficos Clerides

Clark's visit to the region, Deputy Special Representative Gustave Feissel resumed discussions earlier this month with the leaders of the two communities, the spokesman said.

Ghosts of Siad Barre still stalk Somalia

By Michael M. Phillips
The Associated Press

MOGADISHU — Somalis know General Ahmad Jilao Addo all too well.

For more than a decade, Mogadishu's most notorious political prison was called simply "godka Jilao" — Jilao's hole. Prisoners who entered it rarely saw a lawyer or a judge, but the torturer visited frequently.

Now Gen. Jilao has a new job: co-chief of the Mogadishu police, a force resurrected by the United Nations and armed by Americans, Egyptians and others anxious to see some law and order in a country that has known little but chaos for three years.

When its attempt to arrest militia leader Mohammad Farah Aideded ended in frustration and lethal street battles three months ago, the U.N. mission gave up trying to decide who were the good guys and who the bad.

Some Somalis fear the result is that hated figures from the 22-year dictatorship of Mohammad Siad Barre are gaining new power and legitimacy through their dealings with the mission.

Men who were secret policemen or brutal military commanders meet with U.N. diplomats, attend U.N. peace talks, and in some cases control powerful institutions that are being rebuilt with U.N. help.

"The Somali people think that the United Nations just seeks understandings with the warlords and their supporters," said Mohammad Sheikh, an elder in Gen. Aideded's Habre-Gedir subclan who considers himself neutral in clan disputes. "New faces must come out."

Gen. Jilao, who commanded Mr. Siad Barre's secret police in Mogadishu, is the most obvious example because the U.N. mission plans to provide the new city police with 5,000 M-16 assault rifles and a fleet of vehicles by the end of this month.

The most hated man in Somalia, however, is probably Gen. Mohammad Said Hersi, a son-in-law of Mr. Siad Barre who calls himself Gen. Morgan. He earned the nickname butcher of Hargeisa when his forces levelled 80 per cent of the buildings in that northern city in 1988 because the people were suspected of supporting rebels.

Tens of thousands of people were killed and 400,000 were forced to flee into the Ethiopian desert.

Gen. Morgan attended the U.N.-sponsored peace talks in Addis Ababa last month. On Jan. 17, Boutros Ghali, the U.N. secretary-general, lifted travel restrictions on Gen. Morgan, whose men control about half of Kismayu, a southern city.

"He's treated like anyone else," said Abdullahi Moallim Mohammed, a member of Gen. Aideded's Habre-Gedir subclan who was director of the labour ministry under Mr. Siad Barre. "He's no longer considered a war criminal according to the U.N. He's been rehabilitated by the United Nations."

While U.N. officials are "aware of charges laid against some former members of the Siad Barre regime who are now still active in Somalia, it is up to the Somali people themselves to decide on individuals' rights to play a role in society," said U.N. spokesman George Bennett.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Aideded's wife living on Canadian welfare

TORONTO (R) — Somali warlord Mohammad Farah Aideded's wife, who is living in London, Ontario on welfare, has returned to Canada after a five-week African visit with her husband, Khadija Gurhan, 35, returned last week after visiting Eritrea and Kenya, members of the Somali community told the Toronto Sun in a report carried by the Canadian Press. Ms. Gurhan was also at Gen. Aideded's side during sensitive peace talks in Ethiopia with warring Somali factions, they said. Mr. Gurhan, who left Canada Dec. 13 to join Gen. Aideded, has been receiving welfare since arriving in Canada as a refugee with her children in October 1989. "The community is 100 per cent upset that she can come and go like this," Hassan Isac Bonino, a spokesman for the Somali community told the Sun. Ms. Gurhan and her four children lives in a \$1,000-a-month townhouse in London. Immigration spokesman Milt Best said officials don't keep track of permanent residents and Mr. Gurhan is entitled to travel. "She can come and go as she pleases. We have no record of her travels," Best said.

King Hassan welcomes U.S. congressmen

RABAT (AFP) — King Hassan II welcomed a delegation of U.S. congressmen Saturday in the first official visit at this level since the election of U.S. President Bill Clinton, state radio said. The congressmen, who arrived late Friday in Rabat, are on a working visit due to last several days in which ways of developing links between the two countries particularly in economic matters are due to be discussed. No details were made available of the talks with King Hassan, but the leader of the U.S. delegation Tom Wilentz said on arrival Friday that they were to discuss the "reality and perspectives" of relations between Washington and Rabat with Moroccan leaders. The delegation was welcomed by Minister of State Ahmad Alaoui, Foreign Minister Abdul Latif Filali and the new U.S. ambassador, Marc Charles Ginsberg, who has only been in the post a week. The delayed appointment of Mr. Ginsberg gave rise to speculation in some political circles that relations between the two countries were not at their best.

Iran ready to send troops, relief to Bosnia

NICOSIA (R) — Iran is ready to send up to 10,000 soldiers to join U.N. peacekeepers in Bosnia and to devote a cargo plane for relief work there, a member of Iran's parliament said on Saturday. The official Iranian IRNA news agency said Mohammad Karim Shahrzad, a member of the presiding board of the Iranian parliament, made the announcement in Kuala Lumpur. He was speaking at a conference on Bosnia-Herzegovina attended by parliamentarians from 30 countries. IRNA added, Mr. Shahrzad also proposed that representatives of the world's parliaments gather in Sarajevo, currently besieged by Bosnian Serbs, to find a solution to the plight of Bosnian Muslims. Iran offered last July to send a 10,000-strong division to Bosnia as part of a 17,000-man force from Islamic countries to help protect U.N.-designated "safe areas" for Bosnian Muslims from attack by Serbs. The offer was not taken up.

Roman tomb unearthed near Tripoli

TRIPOLI (AFP) — An intact Roman tomb, dating back to the first century A.D., has been discovered recently near the Libyan capital, the head of the Libyan antiquities department reported Saturday. Ali Khaddour told AFP the tomb was unearthed by chance during construction work on the site, 20 kilometres west of Tripoli, where a school was being built. The Libyan official said more than 30 objects were found in the tomb, including pottery, glassware and ancient coins. Libya, an Afro-Arab state on the Mediterranean, is home to numerous archaeological sites, such as Cyrenaica in the east, which dates back to the Hellenic era, the central well-preserved Roman city Leptis Magna and Sabratha in the west and a Carthaginian colony where a Roman amphitheatre was later built.

Kuwait, Italy to start exercise in Gulf

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwaiti and Italian naval ships were holding a one-day joint military exercise Sunday. The Kuwaiti armed forces said "The Kuwaiti naval force will conduct a joint manoeuvre with the Italian naval force present in Kuwaiti territorial waters," an armed forces statement said. It said the manoeuvre was aimed at upgrading the emirate's naval force combat capacity. The live-ammunition exercise would be conducted north-east of Kuwait's Kubar Island. Since the 1991 Gulf war, Kuwaiti armed forces have taken part in scores of joint exercises with leading members of the U.S.-led alliance that ended Iraq's seven-month occupation. Kuwaiti naval commanders told the official Kuwait News Agency on Thursday that six Kuwaiti and two Italian vessels would take part in the exercises. They would involve firing short range missiles, conducting anti-submarine operations and practising electronic warfare such as jamming communications. The navy had participated in 150 joint manoeuvres with the ships of Gulf war allies since the conflict, they said.

3 Iranians held on Thai theft charges

BANGKOK (AFP) — Three Iranians were arrested and charged with theft in Thailand's northern province of Nakhon Sawan, a news report said Sunday. The two men and a woman, identified as Muhassup, Sawam Sabanasef and Seyedat Nasef, were arrested Saturday after the owner of a motorcycle spare-parts shop reported to police that they had snatched money from a drawer and run away, government-owned television said. The three pretended to be customers, and while talking to the shop-keeper they suddenly took the money and fled, the report said. The report did not say how much money they stole from the shop but police said \$2,000 and 8,560 baht (\$342) were found on them. The three admitted the charges, it added.

Gaza goes for guns ahead of autonomy

By Robert Mahoney
Reuters

JAZA — The Young Palestinian pulled out 4,000 from his hip pocket. He was going shopping — for guns.

A year ago he probably would have returned home with his cash unspent. Then it was virtually impossible to find good guns for sale in the Gaza Strip owing to an Israeli blockade.

But since the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace deal last September, pistols and assault rifles have been trickling into Gaza with the knowledge of the Israeli security services. Palestinian activists and arms dealers say.

Gazans have also been opening up arms and ammunition caches hidden during the Palestinian intifada.

Israeli security sources agree arms are spreading but they deny the Shin Bet internal security service is turning a blind eye.

They say both Israel and the PLO have an interest in restricting weapons before the unruly strip is handed over to limited Palestinian self-government later this year.

But the young man with the money insists some weapons are coming in with the knowledge of the Shin Bet which has informers among the Palestinian thieves and drug dealers who help supply arms from Israel through a chain of middlemen to political groups.

"The (secret) police know all about it," said the youngster from the Fateh hawks, a military wing of Yasser Arafat's Fateh faction of the PLO.

He said most of the weapons were pistols for personal protection although American M-16 and Israeli Galil semi-automatic rifles were also coming.

Senior Fateh men, he said, now routinely carried concealed pistols, openly carrying a weapon still spells death or arrest for a Palestinian.

The new demand has pushed up prices for all guns except Russian-designed AK-47 rifles, a shortage of bullets for this highly-popular guerrilla weapon, not used in Israel, has slashed its street price by 25 per cent to around \$5,000.

The price of an M-16 has risen about \$2,000 to \$9,000 depending on how many middlemen are involved. A pistol

such as a Beretta goes for \$3,000 upwards.

Some weapons, particularly pistols and AK-47s are smuggled from neighbouring Egypt, the Fateh Hawk said. Most are either stolen from Israelis or bought from them for cash or drugs, he added.

The only problem for gun-owners is the scarcity of ammunition. A bullet costing 90 agorot (30 cents) in Israel ends up costing 10 to 12 shekels (\$3.5 to \$4) by the time it reaches Gaza.

Young boys rummage through garbage from Israeli army bases for bullets and scour army shooting ranges for dropped ammunition which they can sell for huge profits.

In interviews with Reuters other political activists, go-betweens and criminals confirmed this assessment.

Only Hamas said it was forbidden for religious reasons from using the hashish or cocaine it seized from Gazan addicts and dealers, to buy arms.

Does this mean anyone in Gaza can buy a gun? No, say both the PLO and Hamas. "You have to be from an organisation," said a Hamas

member. "It is still not easy for an individual. He would have to have lots of money."

The PLO man agreed. "I have a list of everyone with arms in my area and the (serial) number of his weapon," said the Fateh Hawk. "We watch who is carrying guns... we confiscate guns and ammunition from anyone who is not 'clean'."

He and others estimated thousands of pistols and hundreds of rifles had come into the strip since September's self-rule deal.

Fateh has warned arms dealers in leaflets not to sell to private individuals. The Hawk acknowledged some still do.

Palestinians fear for their safety under self-rule because of political assassinations — there have been at least three in Gaza since the peace deal — the rekindling of family feuds and rising crime.

The Hawks, some of whom will become part of Mr. Arafat's police force, believe the PLO can keep the lid on Gaza.

"There is no way we are going to have another Lebanon here," the Hawk said, referring to the possibility of civil war.

Hamas, the PLO's main rival and opponent of the deal with Israel, so far agrees.

"We will not turn our guns on Palestinians," the Hamas member said. But he insisted that Hamas, unlike Fateh, would continue to procure weapons to attack Israelis.

Many of those interviewed believed Israel was ignoring the spread of small arms because it wanted to encourage internal Palestinian strife.

"If we Gazans are not busy fighting each other then we will busy ourselves by fighting the Israelis," one Islamic Activist said.

One Israeli security source dismissed this as twisted machiavellian thinking.

"High-level contacts between Israel and the PLO leadership on security in Gaza are continuing. Both sides want the Palestinian police to be well-armed and equipped to maintain security when autonomy comes," the source said.

Whether Israel is turning a blind eye to the gun dealers or not is evident.

"Anybody with the right connections can get a weapon now," said one dealer.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Deserts 4/14
Jordan Valley 11/20

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 13, Aqaba 39 Humidity readings: Amman 19 per cent, Aqaba 67 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Rami Mazawi 747884
Dr. Khalil Al Jibai 740740
Dr. Mohammed Othman 612232
Dr. Salah Al Usud 649028
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 625672
Al Salam pharmacy 636731
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Nairoukh pharmacy 637660
Najih pharmacy 637632

IRBID:
Dr. Mazen Sharran 248356

Aldous pharmacy 1-1

ZARQA:
Dr. Rami Alallah 984424
Khalil pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 643402
Traffic Police 896399
Public Security Department 63021
Hotel Complaints 612800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information
(directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone
Repair 623101
Aldali Telephone Repair 691101

Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 697100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power
Company 436361
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Int'l. Airport 08-53200

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813812/32
Khadija Maternity, J. Amn 642816
Akil Maternity, J. Amn 642412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malika, J. Amman 636140
Palestine Shmeisani 6641714
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845945
Al-Masheer Hospital 6972579
The Islamic, Abdali 6641717
Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 7771017
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 7711126
Army, Marka 8916115
Queen Alia Hospital 60224050
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital 09/983323
Zarqa Maternity Hospital 09/983323

The Sina Hospital 09/986732
Al-Haram Modern Hospital 09/989090
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital 02/272555
Green Chirchik Hospital 02/272275
Al-Nafes Hospital 02/274700
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital 03/314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (09)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:10 Sanaa (RJ)
08:30 Jeddah (RJ)
08:35 Damascus (RJ)
09:20 Riyadh (RJ)
09:55 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:00 Beirut (RJ)
10:20 New Delhi (RJ)
10:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

FLIGHTS

16:55 Cairo (RJ)
18:45 Bangkok (RJ)
19:00 Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

09:25 Cairo (MS)
10:00 Khartoum (SD)
12:25 Frankfurt (LH)
18:45 Dubai (EM)
01:15 Amsterdam (KL)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:00 Beirut (RJ)
11:00 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
12:05 London (RJ)
12:15 Frankfurt (LH)
12:45 Cairo (RJ)
20:00 Dhahran (RJ)
20:15 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
20:30 Dubai, Karachi (RJ)
20:45 Damascus (RJ)
21:30 Abu Dhabi, Muscat (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:00 Istanbul (TA)
08:15 Beirut (ME)
10:25 Cairo (MS)
11:00 Khartoum (SD)
13:30 Bahrain, Abu Dhabi (GF)
17:45 Dubai (KL)
02:15 Amsterdam (KL)

HUAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 every Monday
Arr. Damascus

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Banana 720/450
Banana (Muskanna) 680
Cauliflower 110/60
Cucumbers (large) 250/180
Cucumbers (small) 250/180
Eggplant 160/60
Grille 900/600
Green beans 200/120
Lemon 700/350
Marrow (small) 120/50
Marrow (large) 120/50
Onion (green) 370/200
Onion (red) 350/300
Pepper (hot) 200/160
Pepper (sweet) 240/180
Radish 260/180
Tomato 100/50
Spinach 170/80
String beans 500/400

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:30 Le Monde Sous Marins
18:30 Magazine Local
19:00 News in French
19:15 The weekly sports magazine
19:30 News in Arabic
20:00 The Torkelbans
20:30 Thirty something
21:10 News in English
22:00 News in English
22:20 Feature Film: "Fire And Desire"

PRAYER TIMES

05:09 Fajr
06:31 (Sunrise) Duha
11:47 Dhuhur
14:50 Asr
17:05 Maghrib
18:25 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swifeth, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 637265
St. Joseph Church Tel. 634500
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637441
De La Salle Church Tel. 617577
Terresanta Church Tel. 623660

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Amman International Church Tel. 625226

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 664195

Ferry company nets \$9 m profit in 1993

AMMAN (Petra) — The Arab Maritime Bridge Company (AMBC) which operates a ferry service between Aqaba and the Sinai port of Nuweibeh last year made a \$9 million profit amounting to 150 per cent of the company's total capital, according to an announcement here Sunday.

Mohamad Dalabi, the company's general director, said that in 1993 the ferries transported 29,000 passengers with their luggage and vehicles, up from 14,000 in 1989.

In outlining services of AMBC, which is owned by Iraq, Jordan and Egypt equally, Mr. Dalabi said the ferry service was running smoothly because of the good facilities provided to travellers by authorities at the Aqaba and Nuweibeh ports.

The ferries currently operate twice daily commuting between Nuweibeh and Aqaba, but plans are under way to increase the trips, said Mr. Dalabi.

The fare for the passengers and vehicles are set by the Jordanian-Egyptian protocol. It is JD 8 for Jordanians and Egyptians per one-way trip, the fare for other travellers is \$18.

Mr. Dalabi said AMBC operates three ferries: the "Concord" which accommodates 3,000 passengers and 35 vehicles, the "Jimmy" which takes 1,650 passengers and nine vehicles, and the "Noor" which can take up to 9,000 passengers and 22 vehicles.

The company owns 25 per cent of each of the ferries and rents the rest from their owners, but in four years AMBC will take full ownership under an agreement concluded with the shipowners, said Mr. Dalabi.

In addition, the company plans to purchase tourist boats to operate between the port of Aqaba and the neighbouring ports, he said.

In line with the expansion, he added, the company purchased a plot of land on which to build the its permanent headquarters in Aqaba.

Visiting Canadian business team explores bilateral potentials

AMMAN (J.T.) — Canada's Ambassador to Jordan Andrew Robinson Sunday urged the public and private economic sectors to bolster bilateral economic and trade deals and the exchange of expertise with Canada.

The volume of trade between Canada and Jordan is meagre, and efforts are urgently needed to increase that volume and diversify the goods exchanged, said the ambassador at a meeting of Canadian and Jordanian officials and businesspersons at the Ministry of Industry and Trade in Amman.

Trade relations could be boosted under the present trade protocols signed by Canada and Jordan, and with the help of the Jordan-Canada Business Council (JCBC) set up last year, said Mr. Robinson.

The Jordanian side was led by Secretary General Marwan Awad of the Ministry of Industry and Trade who echoed the ambassador's views.

Jordan has a genuine desire to increase the volume of trade between the two countries and benefit from Canada's expertise, and it is also interested in conducting a programme of exchanging visits by businesspersons and officials to explore areas of potential investment, said Mr. Awad.

He suggested the formation of a joint Canadian-Jordanian committee to convene as soon as possible and chart a programme for expanding trade links.

Mr. Awad, who noted that the Jordanian economy faced difficulties over the last few years because of developments in the region, said the country's laws offer attractive incentives to investors from Arab and foreign countries.

Mr. Awad told the Jordan Times that the Canadian team, currently on a tour of four Arab countries, is exploring possibilities for launching joint ventures and studying the prospects of new markets in the Arab World.

Asked about Jordan's imports from Canada, Mr. Awad said that they range between \$7 million and \$10 million annually mainly in industrial equipment, but he noted that Jordan's exports to the North American country are less than \$5 million.

Mr. Awad said the Canadian team came to Jordan at the invitation of the JCBC which groups industry representatives and other businesspersons in the Kingdom.

He said the visit comes less than two weeks after a visit to Jordan by the Premier of the

Canadian state of Ontario, Bob Rae, who was accompanied by a trade delegation to discuss promoting trade and economic links.

The Canadian team later met with Mohammad Asfour, chairman of the Federation of the Jordanian Chambers of Commerce to discuss business and trade relations.

Mr. Robinson was quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, as saying that his country was striving to bolster its ties with Jordan in all fields, especially economic and trade links.

The Canadian government has been dispatching trade teams to the Arab region in the last few years with the purpose of achieving better and stronger economic ties with them, said the ambassador.

Mr. Asfour told the visitors that the Middle East region, and especially Jordan, was about to witness changes and developments in which Jordan would play a key role in view of its central geographic location.

Later the Jordan-Canada Business Council held a meeting with the visiting Canadian group.

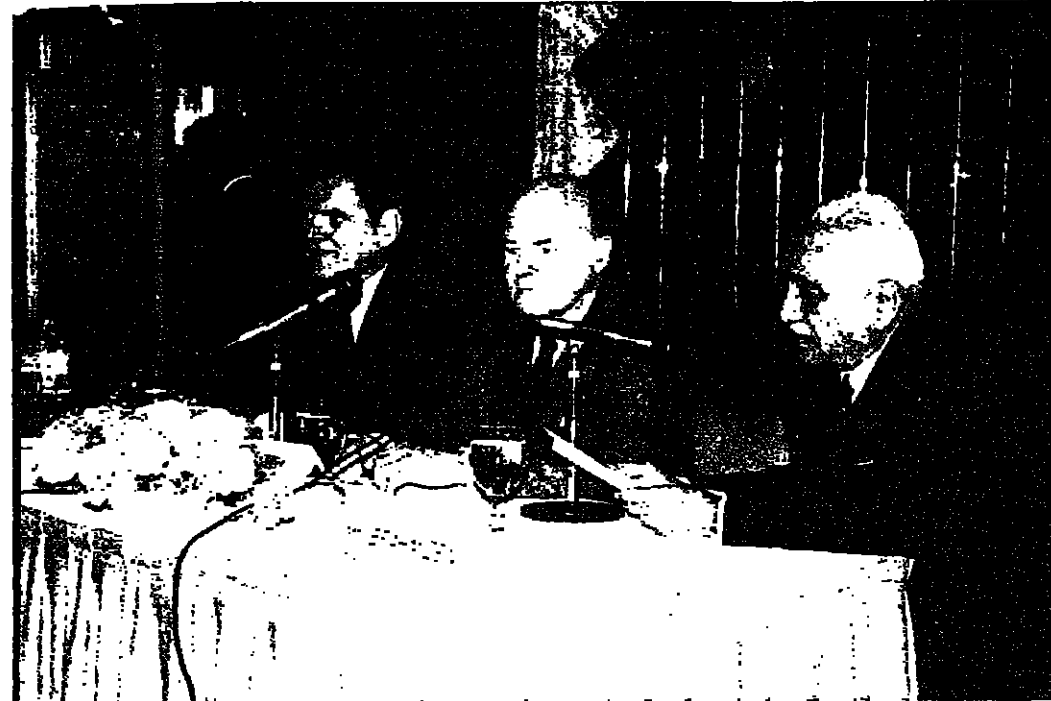
At the meeting Deputy Chairman of the Jordanian Businessmen's Association

(JBA) Ibrahim Zein expressed hope that the council would be instrumental in promoting bilateral trade.

Mr. Zein noted that there were good opportunities for launching joint investment ventures in Jordan, particularly as the Kingdom could play a significant role in Canada's trade with Middle Eastern countries.

Lambert Toupin, the head of the Canadian team, outlined the reason behind the tour in the Arab World, and the visit to Jordan.

He expressed hope that the visit would end with a general framework for increasing trade and economic relations.



Deputy Chairman of the Jordanian Businessmen's Association Ibrahim Zein (right) speaks at a meeting of the Jordan-Canada Business Council. Also on the podium, from left to right are Canadian Ambassador to Jordan Andrew Robinson and head of a visiting team of Canadian businesspersons Lambert Toupin.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Art exhibition by Syrian artist Yasser Hammond at Baladna Art Gallery (Wastai Al Tal Street).
- ★ Exhibition by Lebanese artist Hussein Madi at Darat Al Fann of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation. Also showing the "permanent" exhibition of 54 Arab contemporary artists. (Tel. 643251/2)
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Raja' Abu Ghazaleh and Mohammad Al Jalous at the Jordan Writers Association.
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Makram Khaghandoqah at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Omar Al Basoul at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition on the art of architecture at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by several Iraqi and Jordanian artists at Orfali Art Gallery (Tel. 826932).

FILMS

- ★ Short film in French entitled "Pingouin Blues" at the French Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.
- ★ Film in French entitled "L'Ours" at the French Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.
- ★ Film entitled "The Mississippi is Burning" at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art at 6:00 p.m.

SLIDE-LECTURE

- ★ Slide-lecture about the many well preserved antique villages in the limestone Massif area in northern Syria by Mr. Jacques Seigne at the Friends of Archaeology Centre at 7:00 p.m.

DRAMA

- ★ Drama entitled "Hamlet Wakes Up Again" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 7:00 p.m.

SEMINAR

- ★ Seminar entitled "Women's Rights in the Nationality and Passports Law" with the participation of Lower House of Parliament Member Ms. Toujan Faisal, Dr. Husni Al Shuyab and Mr. Manther Hamu at the Royal Cultural Centre at 6:00 p.m.



REVIEWING JUDICIAL SYSTEMS: Justice Minister Taher Hikmat Sunday receives visiting Qatari Islamic Cleric Sheikh Abdul Aziz Saleh Al Khalifeh and accompanying officials and briefed them on the ministry's work, saying that the ministry provides the necessary cadres for developing judicial procedures, but does not interfere in the judiciary. Sheikh Khalifeh reviewed the judicial system in his country and voiced hope for closer cooperation between the judicial systems in both countries. Mr. Hikmat said the visit by the Islamic clerics represents another step on the path of enhancing the brotherly relations between both countries. The meeting was attended by the ministry's Secretary General Mahmoud Hijazi and Qatari Ambassador to Jordan Nasser Ben Abdul Aziz Ali Nasser.

Sahab water shortage to be solved by new pipe

AMMAN (Petra) — Factories in the Sahab Industrial City and the Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation (JIEC) Sunday voiced their deep concern over water shortages affecting the industrial city, stressing that such shortages have been obstructing industrial development.

The issue was raised with Minister of Water and Irrigation Hisham Al Khatib and Minister of Industry and Trade Rima Khalaf by JIEC Director General Fayez Suheimat at a meeting held at the industrial city Sunday.

Of the city's 314 factories, only 260 receive regular water supplies, complained Mr. Suheimat. He said at least 15,000 people work or visit Sahab Industrial City daily, making adequate water supplies necessary in addition to water needed as an essential component in certain industries, Mr. Suheimat said.

Following the discussion, an agreement was reached to lay a major water pipe directly from the main water tower in the region to the Sahab Industrial City.

Reporting link shifts at Palestinian Affairs Department

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The director general of the Department of Palestinian Affairs (DPA) has become responsible to Minister of State Adel Irsheid after a decision by the Cabinet to shift the DPA head from reporting to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The DPA is an independent government institution but, for reasons of reporting to a higher authority, its director general had previously been linked to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The DPA had been known as the Ministry of Occupied Territories until 1988 when Amman severed legal and administrative ties with the West Bank.

From 1988, the DPA has acted as a facilitator by verifying various documents for the Palestinians in the occupied territories.

It also coordinates various needs for the Palestinians with the respective government institutions, especially in the areas of health, education and agriculture.

Another area where the DPA is involved is in ensuring the smooth flow of people crossing the bridges to the occupied territories.

The responsibilities of the DPA in the Kingdom involve close cooperation with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) to provide the most possible services to refugees in camps besides ensuring a good infrastructure and adequate basic facilities at these camps.

From 1988 on, the DPA was run by Ahmad Qatanani who, in 1991, was transferred to the post of adviser at the Prime Ministry.

Mr. Irsheid took over as DPA director general until he became Minister of State in December.

The DPA is now being run by Assem Ghosheh who had previously held the posts of secretary general at the ministries of Energy, Youth and Rural Affairs.

The department has been credited as a strong backup to the Jordanian negotiating team with Israel since it houses comprehensive studies and reports on the occupied territories and the developments that took place since 1967.

3 Indian world cyclists visit Jordan

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Three young Indian students on a world trip on bicycles are now visiting Jordan, carrying their "message of peace and goodwill."

Dinesh Chandran, 23, Suresh K.N., 22, and Suresh Kumar K.V., 21, who arrived in Jordan late Wednesday, are in the early stage of their trip, during which they hope to cover at least 60 countries and nearly 90,000 kilometres.

The three, all university students from the south Indian city of Bangalore, launched their trip in Nairobi, Kenya, where they arrived by air along with their bicycles on Nov. 18.

From Kenya, they cycled through Uganda and then Sudan and Egypt before taking a ferry from Nuweibeh to Aqaba. From Jordan they plan to pass through Syria, Turkey and Bulgaria and then continental Europe. Mr. Chandran told the Jordan Times.

"We are on a mission of peace and goodwill for all," he said. "We intend to spread this message and also have

cultural exchanges with the people of the countries that we pass through."

The three students, who also intend to visit the United States and the rest of North America, were chosen by their college and granted a leave of absence to undertake the trip, which is sponsored by the International Lions Club, the Rotary Club and several voluntary organisations, in three years.

"We have to get back in the three years and continue our studies," said Mr. Chandran.

"We hope to cover as many countries as possible during this period."

Things have gone well for the trip so far except for one unfortunate disaster that struck a few hours after they landed in Nairobi.

They were on their way along the 30-kilometre main highway between Kenyatta Airport and Nairobi city when they were waylaid and robbed of all their valuables, including cash. It was an experience typical of Kenya, long notorious for its highwaymen, where shops close at least one hour before sunset for fear of hold-ups.



Indian cyclists Dinesh Chandran, Suresh Kumar K.V. and Suresh K.N.

The Indian cyclists had to rely on the generosity of the sizeable Indian community in Kenya to be saved from the fate of having to call off the trip altogether, Mr. Chandran recalled.

"We don't travel at night any more, and spend the nights with Indian communities wherever possible," Mr. Chandran said. But security

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Regent congratulates Norway

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Sunday sent a cable to King Harold V of Norway congratulating him in his name and on behalf of the Jordanian people and government on the anniversary of his accession to the throne. Prince Hassan wished King Harold good health and happiness and the Norwegian people further progress and prosperity.

Royal Decree issued

AMMAN (Petra) — A Royal Decree was issued Sunday approving the appointment of Safwan Rizq Al Bataineh as advisor at the prime ministry.

EMBASSY OF INDIA AMMAN

Republic Day of India

On the occasion of the Republic Day of India, a flag hoisting ceremony will be held on Wednesday, January 26, 1994 at 10 a.m. at the premises of the embassy of India, First Circle, Jabal Amman (Opp. Malhas Hospital).

All Indians with their family members are cordially invited to attend the function.

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.

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Editorial and advertising offices:

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University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

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Before it's too late

THE DECISION of Minister of Health Dr. Abdul Rahim Malhas to go public about what he believes is the state of the medicine and food that Jordanians consume is in itself a courageous and admirable act that falls squarely within the confines of genuine democratic tradition. As Jordan is well on its way to consolidating its democratic process, the public disclosures of the minister about this vital issue are like a breath of fresh air. We are, however, not prepared as yet to endorse everything that was attributed to Dr. Malhas until it is carefully examined by a competent judicial authority.

The charges that at least some of the medicine and food used by Jordanians are not only unfit for human consumption but also life threatening are so ominous that they warrant an urgent and independent scrutiny. The accusations that there is a "mafia" of sorts controlling the import and distribution of drugs and foodstuff or that "sharks" are running the system that governs the import and sale of such products are very critical and justify a serious and effective inquiry. Accusations that there are even governmental pressure groups that "doctor" the admittedly ineffective state supervision of the importation and sale of such products on the basis of existing legislation, call for a close examination of both the legislation itself and the government bodies that are responsible to enforce the law.

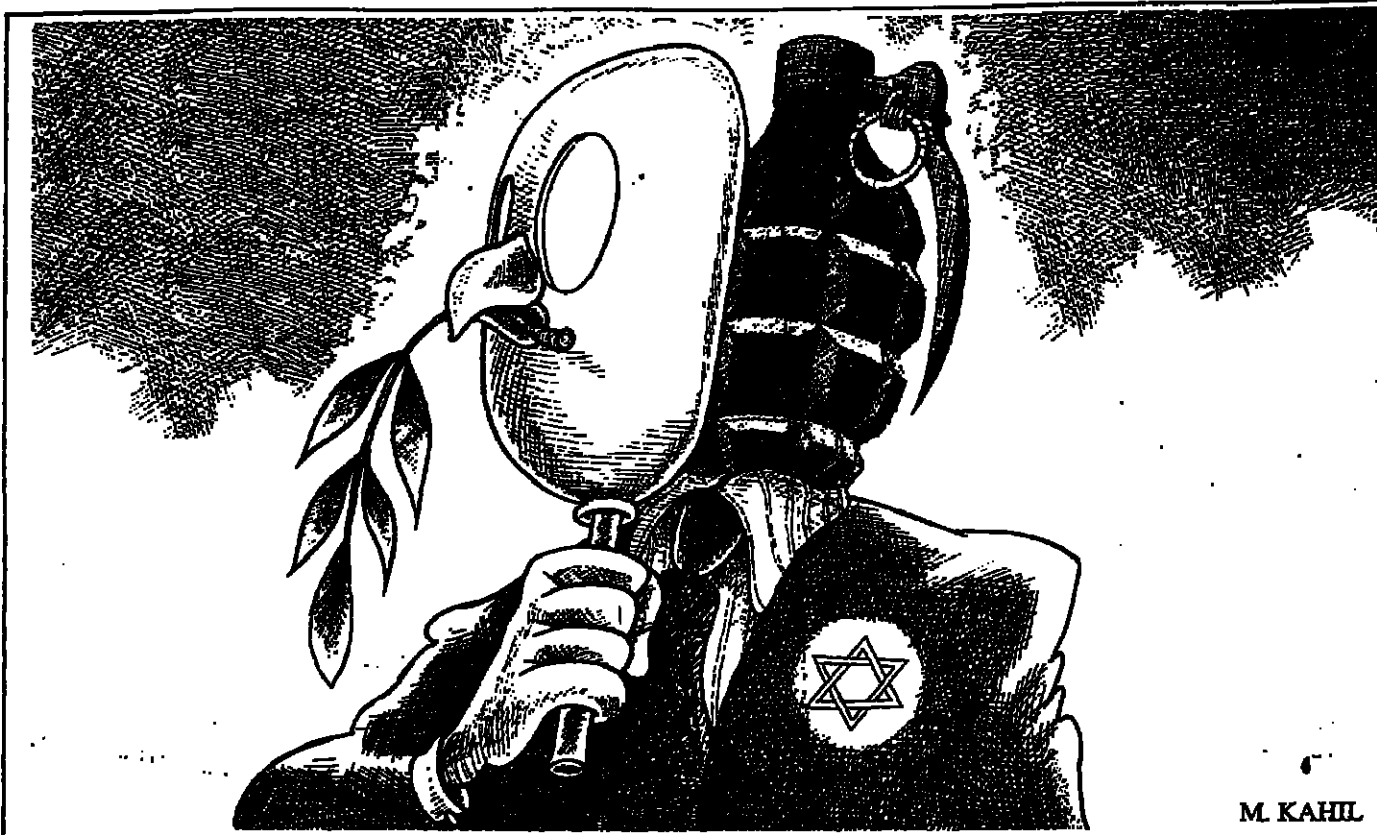
We need to get to the bottom of these assertions. We need to do a better job this time than in 1989 when another scandal erupted over the deployment of sewage tankers for the transportation of unprocessed cooking fat. Jordanians never heard the end of that story, but surely no one will stomach a similar performance this time. Also forgotten are numerous charges that agricultural products in Jordan are so heavily contaminated with chemicals that it makes them major carriers of carcinogenic elements. Independent sources confirm that such chemicals are still being indiscriminately administered by farmers because no one in the government seems to be taking the issue seriously. Also questioned during the past few years was the quality of the water we drink and the air we breathe.

In terms of insufficient legislation or lack of public-spirited agencies to supervise even the current short-circuited regulations, the list is indeed long and reaches most aspects of Jordanian lives. For a while we all thought that the much celebrated Association for the Protection of Public Consumers would act as an effective watchdog over the same concerns that the minister of health is now desperately sounding the alarm about.

This is where Parliament can assert itself most forcefully in a cool and collected manner. We are delighted, therefore, to learn that the acting speaker of the Lower House has called for an urgent meeting over the issue. Parliament needs to suspend all business and devote as much time as needed to get all the facts and put in motion a correction process. Meanwhile, the minister should stick to his guns and prepare himself to put all the information he has in the hands of the people's deputies.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Sunday described as positive the latest statement by the U.S. president over the Middle East peace process in which he emphasised the need for the implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions as the basis for the aspired peace. The statements, coming for the first time from the American administration constitutes a turning point in the U.S. strategy, but one which is totally opposed by the Israeli stand, said the paper. Based on resolutions 242 and 338, the Middle East problem will have to be solved on all tracks and entail Israeli withdrawals from the occupied Arab lands, said the paper. But, it said, according to Israel's strategy, peace should be conducted with separate Arab states piecemeal and with Israel having the upper hand in every deal. There is no doubt that His Majesty King Hussein has focused on the question of a lasting peace based on the U.N. resolutions stressing that peace ought to be implemented on all tracks at the same time, said the daily. To back the Jordanian stand, the King is insisting on coordinating his country's efforts with those of the other Arab parties involved in the peace process with Israel; and this stand too was conveyed to the U.S. president in Washington, the paper continued.



M. KAHIL

Israel — is yesterday's enemy tomorrow's bigger one?

By Izzat R. Dajani

Ever since World War II, there is no cause or issue that has so dominated the political and psychological landscape of the Arab World as has the issue of Palestinian rights. Yet, Israel's policy remains to concentrate on the eternal Arab military inferiority whereby it keeps dictating its own terms to its neighbours. This fits well with what previous U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz wrote: "There is crucial need of a strong defence to back up a strong diplomacy."

Israel, as a country, was never an indigenous part of the Middle East. Most indicators support this argument as the country remains confused of what it truly is: A European nation, a Middle Eastern country or an American state. The Arab World never chose Israel as its neighbour and the Palestinians never wanted to vacate their homes in Palestine in favour of Israeli occupiers and Jewish settlers. Yet, the Palestinians have chosen to move many steps forward in recognising and facing reality and making it dominate their impractical ideal. They chose to negotiate an end to this long suffering. In negotiations, the fundamental principle that must prevail incorporates the understanding that irrespective of whether one likes his adversaries or dislikes them, agrees or disagrees with them, the goal centres on establishing an array of good working relationships able to deal with whatever differences exist.

However, Israel is employing what is known as competitive tactics by imposing time pressure and appearing firm. Its high demands and very slow concessions are motivated by concern about position and image loss. It seems that negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians in particular, and the other Arabs in general, are characterised by lack of concessional exchange and real problem-solving discussions. There is no evidence of both sides sharing information about goals and priorities in search of what would satisfy both parties' need and real integrative agreement. Con-

cessions are important symbolically as indicators of where expectations should converge. The Palestinians travelled many miles to the extent of being accused of offering concessions beyond the necessary parameters. They recognised Israel's right to exist, they accepted a phased withdrawal without the dismantling of the Israeli settlements in the occupied territories; they offered more than a symbolic handshake with their occupier. Yet Israel's attitude remained as abhorrent as ever in its pursuit of its own path of logic to the extent of risking to impede negotiations. It insists on obtaining concessions without rationalising them away from its own favour which contradicts the very basic principles in negotiations, and makes it extremely difficult for the Palestinians to carry on. It is ironic that Israel demands that Palestinian boys must stop throwing stones at the occupying troops whilst at the same time it allows the Israeli settlers to fire live ammunition at anything they simply suspect as hostile!

Israel adopts a bargaining position. This puts relationship and substance in conflict whereby the relationship tends to become entangled with the problem. Israel must focus on common interests and not just bargain over positions which would ultimately endanger and possibly eliminate any chance of an ongoing relationship. Hatred seems to obscure vision as much as position dominates over interest. Being flexible permits the exploration of imaginative solutions which might meet the bottom line of both Arabs and Israelis.

Itamar Rubinovich, the Israeli ambassador to the United States, said that since the beginning of the Zionist movement in Ottoman Palestine in the nineteenth century "not a single Palestinian leader has made a deal with the Jews" praising Mr. Arafat's "courage" in breaking this tradition. If this is not concessional symbolism, what is?

Ironically and unfortunately, Mr. Arafat conveniently chose to ignore the fact that recogni-

tion by Palestinians of the state of Israel should come last and not at the onset of negotiations. It is only the Palestinians that have the power to give Israel legitimacy. This tactical and dramatic move has hardened Israel's bargaining position as it secured legitimacy and won subsequent recognition even in the most "taboo" places, such as the Vatican.

To Israelis, peace means open borders, trade agreements, airline flights, diplomatic relations, industrial joint ventures, increased and expanded markets, and access to cheap labour. To Palestinians, peace means homeland, identity, human rights, justice and self-determination. The common ground remains as diverse as ever. Hence, through negotiations, parties need to establish goals, learn the nature of the other's goals, identify the issues to be resolved, analyse the social context, in which negotiations occur and design strategies to maximise their chances of success. It is an exercise in discovery, conflict and compromise. Success depends on both sides believing they will gain more by working together than by being apart. The final outcome must be perceived as best for both.

Ironically and sadly, Israel's core negotiating style focuses on adopting positions which are followed by signals that unless the Arabs accept the Israeli offer, its negotiating position will be hardened. This is certainly the wrong attitude for reaching a solution that can last. It seems that the Arabs are growing to dislike the Israelis more in times of peace than during epochs of war.

Israel's power fabric is based on four tools: defence, global influence, intelligence, and foreign aid. Israel concentrated on weaving itself in the fabric of U.S. policy-making apparatus. It understood the importance of this and wanted to ensure that Israel shall never be discarded. It dominated the lobby of interest groups, influenced the media and controlled the financial sector. Israel trusted no one to the extent that it used American aid to

buy information, use people, gather intelligence reports, recruit officials, and employ spies against the U.S. itself. The Pollard case remained one living example of this.

However, it remains true that diminished Arab strength and resolve are an open invitation for Israeli expansion into areas of critical importance and interest. For the overall success of Arab policy, it is critical that Arabs persevere in the restoration of their strength whether militarily, politically or economically. The willingness to negotiate from that strength is a fundamental element of strength itself. It is not humanly possible to totally abolish the war dividend. "This is not intelligently viable as the deep cultural, social, religious and historical boundaries dictate an almost division between Arabs and Israelis," Robert Gates, former CIA chief, once declared. With Israel, Arabs may need to explore every avenue for peaceful accommodation with dignity and humility but must also be prepared for times when national identity and boundary is threatened.

It is best to describe the Israelis as an alien multi-ethnic community of Semites and non-Semites, with diverse cultural affinities, sharing a convenient religious utility. They are now on top, but one wonders how long they can remain so without reaching accommodation with what, sooner rather than later, will be an Arab majority in the land between the Jordan River and the sea? Will Israel's destiny be a direct consequence of its intransigence, insensitivity, irresponsibility and noted self-destructiveness? Will contemporary Israel bear the same consequence as the only known Jewish kingdom which was established in 1000 BC and was destroyed 70 years later? Will Israel learn the limit of the tolerance threshold of its neighbours and cease pushing it beyond its limit? Will it ever learn peaceful co-existence? Only time will unfold which paradigm Israel will come to choose and whether it remains as much an enemy in the future as it has been in the past.

Materialism — the 30,000-item answer

By Richard Harwood

WASHINGTON — The "delectable materialism" of America, as The New York Times once put it, inspires mixed feelings among the people. That is especially true this time of year. The season demands that Americans shop till they drop, and they do. The malls are overrun. Billions change hands. Every household becomes a miniature bazaar.

The success of the season is judged by what people buy and sell, what they give and get. The newspapers announce, with heartfelt enthusiasm: "Retailers chalk up record gains!"

To some intellectuals, the vulgarity of it all is distasteful, an attitude obviously easier to sustain in the warm and well-furnished precincts of American society than in the Anacostias and ruined coal towns of the land. But anti-materialists have been with us for a long time.

Their objections to the consumption addiction come in several varieties, which the historian-sociologist Michael Schudson has discussed in any essay.

There is a puritanical school that laments the emphasis on materialism because it comes at the expense of one's spiritual lives: "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Or: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth where moth and rust doth corrupt and where thieves break through and steal. Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." One antidote is the vow of poverty.

Another strain is the Quaker critique, which is "less concerned with how people feel about goods than with objectionable features of the products themselves, their wastefulness or extravagance." Mr. Schudson adds: "The fashion industry in its various forms is a regular target of such criticism, as it was for the Quakers themselves in their adherence to plain dress."

There is an "aristocratic objection to consumer society that is primarily aesthetic... an attack on ugliness in defence of Culture." It is all right to value material objects so long as they are scarce, beautiful, hand-crafted and generally out of reach of the masses. It is an attitude that disdains assembly lines and mass production because "mass-produced goods are ugly."

There is also a Marxist critique that recognises certain benefits in a consumer society, but condemns it nonetheless because it "rests on the exploitation of workers under the capitalist system of production" and serves as "an opiate of the people, submerging dissatisfaction with life in the exploitative workplace."

We do not know how Marx would respond to America's consumer society today. But

Mr. Schudson was struck by President Boris Yeltsin's reaction to his visit to the United States in 1989. When he returned home he told a crowd how impressed he had been with the abundance of America: "Their supermarkets have 30,000 food items. You can't imagine it. It makes the people feel secure."

Mr. Yeltsin's comments, Mr. Schudson says, "reveal something more," namely: "Abundance and choice... provide a feeling of security, social and even spiritual comfort. This celebratory attitude towards American materialism is far from the scepticism shared by homegrown American journalists and intellectuals."

It is very interesting, as the little Texan with big ears would say, that journalists and intellectuals who are among the major beneficiaries of the consumer society should be soured on it.

The intellectual freedoms Americans enjoy were made possible by the democratic marketplace, advertising industry and all. The entire economy is driven by consumerism, rising and falling according to the rate at which the cash registers ring and the assembly lines move and the degree to which citizens' desires and needs are unfilled.

On the role of advertising as with consumerism itself, Mr. Schudson is ambivalent: "Advertising at times seems to be materialism at its worst, the sizzle without the steak, the idolatry of goods divorced from the utility and enjoyment goods provide, but even this is too simple a view. It recognises neither the aesthetic appeal of some advertising that touches us nor the plain wrapping, antimaterial character of most advertising is, in a sense, Quaker itself — it points to price and so helps keep in mind economy as a chief criterion in buying. Or it is Puritan — recommending a product not because it provides moral or social theological salvation but because it serves certain banal purposes well. It cleans your sink. It gets you to New York in time for your business meeting."

It also undergirds the nation's media system. It subsidises the 25-cent morning newspaper, the popular magazine, the "free" television and radio programming. It is, in short, the life-support system for the mass media.

It does not, as Mr. Schudson notes, "focus on the needs of public life," and "it often takes a stance towards the public life that may not be healthy."

Like the air everyone breathes, it may not be pure and it may not be pretty. But it is nevertheless essential to life in America as most Americans know it — The Washington Post.

LETTERS

Fair testing

To the Editor:

In Jordan, if you apply for a university seat, you cannot choose whatever field you want; it all depends on the tawjihi average. We all know that almost 80,000 students have just finished the first session of their tawjihi examinations. Although they concern so many students, they still are not fair. To prove this, let us take the scientific section as an example. The subjects they have been examined in are: Arabic, English, chemistry, biology, physics, mathematics and Islamic religion. As it can be seen, there is not any religion examination for Christians. So when the average of a Muslim student is calculated — in the scientific section — the highest two grades among chemistry, biology and religion are taken into consideration, on the condition that students pass all these three subjects.

When somebody applies for a university seat here, they only look at his/her average, not at the grades. If a Muslim student barely passes the biology examination and the grade of the religion examination was considered instead, he/she could still enroll into medical studies. (If he/she has a high average). But this does not make sense. How can somebody study medicine because he did well in religion and not in biology? And as a measure of fairness, not of logical conclusion, I think there either should be a religion examination for the Christians as well, or there should be no religion examination at all.

I myself will be having my tawjihi examinations in two years, but this system really bothers me. I hope that by that time they will have done something about it. And as the tawjihi is considered a big event, I think it should at least be fair.

Widad Salah,
P.O. Box 5385,
Amman 11183.

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New Russian government could be trouble for U.S.

By Alan Elsner
Reuter

WASHINGTON — The exclusion of key reformers from Russia's new government is a sharp blow to the United States and could severely disrupt close cooperation between Washington and Moscow, analysts said Friday.

Initial reactions to the news that Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin had formed a government without Russia's two best-known reformers, Yegor Gaidar and Boris Yefimov, focused on the likely economic consequences.

"What we're concerned about, obviously, is whether they'll be able to manage their inflation problem," President Clinton told reporters covering a White House ceremony.

Mr. Chernomyrdin, a former Soviet industrial boss from the oil and gas sector, wants to prop up failing state industries even if this means abandoning monetary discipline. The result will almost certainly be more inflation, possibly hyperinflation, analysts say.

"Russia will probably now follow the Ukrainian course by

putting off hard choices. We will see higher inflation, which in turn will stoke the fires of discontent and help the extremists," said Gabriel Schoenfeld of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies.

The State Department, putting the best light on recent events, said Thursday it would continue to encourage reforms and would work with the new government to the extent that it pursued policies Washington believed could succeed.

But Heritage Foundation analyst Kim Holmes predicted a rocky period ahead for U.S.-Russian relations. "There will be less and less cooperation. We're heading, if not for a divorce, at least for a troubled period in this marriage," Mr. Holmes said.

Ironically, the Russian swing came only days after Mr. Clinton visited Moscow, stood side-by-side with President Boris Yeltsin and said he had won assurances that Russia would continue on the road of reform.

Mr. Clinton's policy has been to stick by Mr. Yeltsin through thick and thin, bend-

ing over backwards to accommodate Russian concerns such as Moscow's opposition to Eastern European countries being admitted to NATO.

Some analysts believe that was a mistake and predict the emergence of an assertive Russian foreign policy that will try to reestablish effective dominance over republics that broke away from Moscow when the Soviet Union collapsed in late 1991.

"The outlook in grim, not so much in economic terms because nothing was happening there anyway, but in foreign policy terms," said Paul Goble, a former State Department expert on Russia now with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Mr. Goble said Russia had already successfully undermined the independence of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Moldova and he predicted it would put increasing pressure on Ukraine.

"We could see salami tactics, with Russia undermining Ukraine step by step," he said. If Ukraine were to fall back

into Moscow's sphere, the other republics would be unlikely to resist for long.

Boston University Professor Uri Ra'anani said Russian policy was now based on a "clearly stated goal of reestablishing control over former Soviet republics."

"The United States has allowed this to happen without objecting. Unless the Clinton administration reverses itself, we are entering a fatal process," Mr. Ra'anani said.

Russia's political swing was precipitated, by an election last month in which voters rebuffed the liberal camp, and left reformers outnumbered in parliament by communists, conservatives and Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's ultra-nationalist Liberal Democratic Party.

Some U.S. scholars cautioned against an excessively gloomy assessment of the situation. Patrick Glynn of the American Enterprise Institute said the reformers could recapture their credibility in opposition.

"The United States ought to remain steadfast in supporting reformers even if they are outside the government," he said.

House schedules urgent talks

(Continued from page 1)

of health, insisted that pharmacies be attended by registered pharmacists.

Dr. Hamzeh also banned the sale of medicine without prescriptions, except for "over the counter" drugs.

Informed sources said the ban was introduced to limit the sale of addictive drugs.

In his interview with Shibani, Dr. Malhas said that "pressure was applied" to overrule a Higher Court of Justice verdict that said pharmacies should be run by pharmacists in whose names they are registered.

The Council for the Interpretation of Laws has overruled the court's verdict on the basis of a 1975 ruling that says pharmacists should not be in charge of their own pharmacies.

Dr. Zaben said that food shipments were also examined by specialised committees before being allowed into the country.

Other sources familiar with the situation, however, said that the inspection of food was the responsibility of various government ministries and departments and that that allows for confusion and inefficiency.

One source said that there were previous attempts to have one agency responsible for the examination of food "but unfortunately there was a power struggle (among the various bodies) and the effort never succeeded."

Sources pointed to the controversy over cooking fat shipments that did not meet specifications but were sold in the market in 1989 as evidence of the inefficiency of some of the departments entrusted with inspecting food sold in the Kingdom.

"Only a thorough investigation can end the controversy created by the minister's statement," said a source familiar with the issue on the condition of anonymity.

"What the minister said is dangerous," he said. "It has to be investigated."

"Parliament is taking the matter very seriously. It will take the proper action on it," said Dr. TUBEISHAT.

Arafat in flurry of contacts

(Continued from page 1)

the Middle East peace process.

After the session, chief PLO negotiator Nabil Shaath said his team would meet again Tuesday with Israeli delegates on the key issues holding up Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

Dr. Shaath said the talks on such sticky issues as who would guard borders to Jordan and Egypt would resume in the Egyptian resort of Taba. Separate talks on civilian issues start Monday, he said.

The consultations with Mr. Mubarak, who often has served as a mediator in Middle East disputes, followed a meeting between Mr. Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres on Saturday in Oslo, Norway.

But there were no visible signs of progress on concrete issues at that meeting, held at the funeral of Norwegian Foreign Minister Johan Jorgen Holst, who died Jan. 13 after two strokes.

Mr. Holst was behind secret meetings that led to the historic Israel-PLO accord signed Sept. 13 in Washington.

Mr. Arafat's visit to Saudi Arabia will enhance his position in the Arab World and could eventually help the PLO dig its way out of a long financial crisis.

The Saudis were once the main contributor to the funds of Fatah, the mainstream PLO group led by Mr. Arafat, but it and other Gulf states cut off the funds after the Gulf crisis.

Mr. Arafat was to fly to Jeddah and perform the Umra or minor pilgrimage in nearby Mecca. PLO officials said they hoped he could see King Fahd in Riyadh, probably on Monday.

His delegation will include PLO Executive Committee member Yasser Abed Rabbo and PLO negotiator Ahmad Qarica, the officials said.

One source said, however, it was not yet certain the Riyadh visit will be an official one and whether the PLO chief will be received as a head of state.

Saudi Arabia was one of more than 70 states to recognise the independent Palestinian state announced by Mr. Arafat in 1988 and King Fahd has in the past given him red carpet airport treatment.

Foreign Muslim leaders who come to Saudi Arabia to per-

Bosnians adapt to America, wonder why so few given the chance

SEATTLE (AP) — Emir Grcic, a blond Muslim with a new checkbook and a churchful of friends, is baffled when U.S. authorities say America can absorb only several thousand Bosnian refugees a year.

As a fresh alumnus of a firing squad — a Serb officer recognised him as a soccer star and spared his life — Mr. Grcic qualified as a Bosnian terror victim and chanced upon a rare U.S. visa.

"People are so welcoming here," he said, knocking back apple cider at a holy family Catholic Church social, surrounded by people who cannot imagine losing 22 kgs in a concentration camp.

Helped by sponsors, Mr. Grcic found his own job and bought a car so he no longer gets up for a 5 a.m. bus. His two sons study in English. His wife is happy. And his new soccer team now dazzles the league.

Refugee workers say that Emir Grcic across the country put into question U.S. policy that lets in only a trickle of desperate Bosnians on grounds that communities cannot make room for them.

"This country could take many, many more Bosnians," said Melody Lanzolla, whose Seattle affiliate of Church World Service seeks families to help refugees settle in. "Response is phenomenal."

In October 1992, after cameras showed walking skeletons in Serb detention camps, U.S. officials allowed 1,000 visas for released prisoners. Volunteer agencies made a nationwide appeal for sponsors.

"I had 200 calls in two days," Ms. Lanzolla said, "and we're only one of seven agencies in Seattle. Multiply that by

the rest of the country."

Because of bureaucracy and poor communication, she said, it was eight months before the first refugees arrived. They waited in grim camps in Croatia while some sponsors moved on to other causes.

Last March, the annual quota was raised to 3,000 so Bosnians in the United States could bring in close relatives. But despite a huge demand, U.N. and U.S. officials processed only 2,000 cases.

Senior State Department officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, blamed slow processing on a reluctance to accept refugees at a time when Americans are believed to be wary of foreigners.

Although the quota was raised again to 10,000 they said, they expect no major effort to make room for Bosnians. Perhaps a million Bosnians seek refuge outside the Balkans, but few borders are open.

"A refugee allergy has grown in Europe and here as well," said Morton Abramowitz, a former deputy assistant secretary of state who now heads the Carnegie Endowment for Peace.

At the holy family rumour room, however, the view is different. Chris Fox, a Seattle lawyer, is selling Enisa Grcic's pastries at the "Taste of the world" food fair, featuring a score of cuisines.

"It has been a wonderful experience, wonderful," Mr. Fox said, offering yet another Grcic-comes-to-America story. This one is about stopping the car before making a turn off the freeway.

Among the handful of other Bosnians in the Seattle area, the enthusiasm is similar.

Melina Babic, 16, started school as a sophomore. She'd missed two years of class, running for her life. She so outshone her classmates that she was bumped up to senior.

"Now she tutors her American friends," said Betty Turulja, Melina's aunt, who has lived in Seattle since 1957. "Everyone loves her."

Emir Dizdarevic is back in Seattle again. He first came for electronics training at Boeing. When his visa expired, authorities would not accept homeland-in-flames as extenuating circumstances.

After a year of shelling, confinement, starvation and torture, he managed to leave Bosnia again. His friends at Boeing found him only after he obtained a U.S. visa and was headed to another state.

His family of four is jammed into John Stannard's suburban home, but all nine occupants say they would not have it any other way.

"You can't believe what we went through trying to get him here," Mr. Stannard said. A second friend joined in to describe what he called impenetrable, unhelpful official American bureaucracy.

Even with local support, refugees face problems. They need someone to drive them around to social welfare offices and doctors. Most spend hours at the dentist, often losing a mouthful of teeth.

Social activity often centres around a church or a Jewish temple, worrying parents who want to keep the Muslim faith fresh in their children's minds.

Dizdarevic, an electronics engineer, can't find even unskilled work. A few Bosnians, unable to adapt, end up wishing they had stayed home.

But most no longer have a home. Return is impossible.

Family in Seattle brings out relatives

SEATTLE (AP) — War in Bosnia was a long way off for Betty Turulja until the evening news showed her own brother lying in a pool of blood, wounded among a pile of corpses in a Sarajevo bread line.

"That was it," said Mrs. Turulja, a Bosnian refugee on an earlier generation. "I got on a plane, determined to bring out my family."

Her brother is still in Sarajevo, but she brought home her sister, another brother, a niece and a nephew, getting them safely through barrages of bullets and bureaucracy.

Back in Seattle, her husband, Mohammad, got visas for his own nieces and nephews. Together, the Turuljas have brought out 14 Bosnians, all on family reunification visas.

"So many more people are still there, desperate and dying," Betty said, stabbing a finger at the tattered list of official phone numbers she calls daily to demand action. "We must stop this war."

In March, she travelled to the Bosnia-Croatia border, where she befriended a group of Bosnian soldiers who smuggled her sister and two daughters out of Sarajevo.

At the same time, she tracked down her brother, Resad Hadzimec, 53, who had been imprisoned and tortured. His wife stayed in Zenica with their 3-year-old daughter to care for her blind mother.

Now she wants to return for her other brother, Dzamil, and also Resad's wife and daughter. "I can't bear thinking about another winter," she said. "It is unbelievable that this has to go on."

Mr. Turulja, a retired clothier, brought his family to Seattle in 1957. The Nazis had killed his brother, and he said Serbs put 145,000 Bosnian Muslims to death between 1941 and 1945.

He knows there are other sides to the complex situation, but he thinks few Americans are paying attention for fear of seeing modern genocide that might force them to get involved.

"People are saying, 'hurry up and finish so we don't have to watch'," Mr. Turulja said. "But I think the whole world misjudged the Bosnian nation."

The Turuljas' 30-year-old son, Dean, nearly went to Bosnia to fight, but decided to stay home and stir up support for ending the war.

"I've seen my parents give everything to this community," he said. "They've taken care of people, sent food and supplies to refugees, raised money with speeches."

Like his father, he decided what he called a double standard among most Americans who speak about human rights but do little to help. "They don't want to know," he said.

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Bosnian Muslims appeal for air strikes after 6 children killed

SARAJEVO (R) — Bosnian Muslims appealed Sunday for NATO air strikes against Serb gunners besieging Sarajevo, asking what more must be done to spur military intervention after six children were killed by mortar fire.

Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic said Saturday's attack only a few hundred metres from U.N. peacekeeping Force Headquarters in a city designated a U.N. "safe area" was another Serb snub to a passive outside world.

"This act humiliates the international community and the dignity of the United Nations and makes efforts to reach peace (at Geneva talks) absurd," Mr. Silajdzic wrote in a letter to U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali.

"We ask you to request the bombardment of Serb positions around Sarajevo according to U.N. and NATO resolutions. What more must happen before U.N. resolutions (to protect six Serb-besieged enclaves in Bosnia) be implemented?" he asked.

The letter was also sent to NATO Secretary-General Manfred Woerner, to Greece as the current president of European Union and to peace mediators Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg.

There has been little sign

that the international community is prepared to step up the Bosnian conflict by launching air strikes. Western nations have in recent days been talking more about pulling their forces out.

Six children were killed and three seriously wounded Saturday as two mortar bombs slammed into their sleigh run in a hilly residential district one kilometre from Serb lines.

A U.N. relief spokesman said two brothers who suffered severe leg wounds in the attack would be airlifted abroad for urgent medical care Monday.

"It is feared that they could lose the legs if they are not evacuated," Kris Janowski, spokesman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees in Sarajevo, told Reuters.

He identified the boys as Elvir Ahmetovic, 14, and his brother Admir, 12.

At the Vatican, Pope John Paul, in a speech on the Roman Catholic Church's International Day of Prayer for Bosnia, edged towards support of military intervention to stop the bloodshed.

"Appropriate authorities have the responsibility to try everything humanly possible to disarm the aggressor and create conditions for a just and lasting peace," he said.

A senior Vatican source has said the Holy See would support "precise, proportionate and perhaps demonstrative" military action in ex-Yugoslavia to stop aggression if all else failed.

The United Nations, meanwhile, reported that aggression of one kind or another was continuing on the battlefronts.

In Muslim-controlled Sarajevo, a total of seven people were confirmed killed and seven wounded by random shelling and sniping in the past 24 hours while one person was killed by Bosnian army fire on the Serb side.

U.N. military spokesman Colonel Bill Aikman said heavy fighting flared anew in Vitez, central Bosnia, where Croats are fighting Muslims.

British U.N. soldiers observed a helicopter, believed to be Croat, flying into the Vitez area and hovering over a quarry in an apparent supply run to Croat troops, Col. Aikman said.

Such flights are forbidden under the NATO no-fly zone over Bosnia.

Col. Aikman said Bosnian Croat forces hit the Muslim-controlled part of Gorzki Vakuf and the Muslim-controlled town of Kakanj with rockets fired from multi-

barrelled launchers.

"This was very unusual," Col. Aikman said, referring to the weaponry. At least one civilian was killed and 10 were wounded in the Kakanj barrage, he said.

Serb forces continued battering northeastern government enclaves with artillery but did not advance on the ground.

Olovo, straddling a vital corridor to the virtually besieged government industrial bastion of Tuzla, was hit by 110 artillery rounds while Gradacac took 29 rounds, Celic 50 and Dastanko 23, Col. Aikman said.

In the southwest, Croat forces were stepping up their artillery siege of the Muslim quarter of Mostar, blasting it with 63 shells and drawing 12 rounds of return fire.

In the breakaway Krajina region of Croatia, Serbs voted Sunday in a run-off presidential election whose importance has been heightened by a recent rapprochement pact between Belgrade and Zagreb.

Milan Martić, who is backed by Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, is running against Milan Babic, a former president of the self-proclaimed Republic of Serb Krajina who was ousted in 1992 by Mr. Milosevic.

Brush fire kills 26 Argentine firefighters

BUENOS AIRES (R) — Twenty-six firefighters, most of them teenaged apprentices, died trapped in a ring of flames while fighting a brush fire in Patagonia Saturday, Argentine officials said.

At least 17 of the dead were youths between 12 and 17 years old training with the all-volunteer local fire brigade, police told reporters in Puerto Madryn, 1,400 kilometres south of Buenos Aires. Three of the victims were women.

Colleagues said the victims had suddenly found themselves trapped inside a tightening ring of flames when the high winds, typical of Patagonia shifted.

"There was this gust of wind and the fire encircled the group," the deputy head of the fire brigade told a radio interviewer. "We found their shovels first, then their helmets — and then we started finding their bodies."

The head of the fire brigade was dismissed on the spot for

sending an inexperienced group into a danger area, DYN news agency reported.

The fight to contain the fire was complicated by lack of aerial guidance. Mechanical problems grounded the only helicopter nearby, Chubut province Governor Carlos Maestri told reporters.

Maestri decreed three days' official mourning in Chubut province and called in heavy earth-moving equipment from nearby areas to attack the fire head-on from Sunday morning.

"We're all completely devastated," he told a local radio station.

Local media said the fire had so far ravaged some 2,500 acres (1,000 hectares) of land around Puerto Madryn, a town on the Atlantic near the Valdes peninsula — one of the world's prime havens for sea lions and one of Argentina's top tourist spots.

Officials piece together data on Indonesia quake

TERNATE, Indonesia (R) — Hundreds of homes, offices and churches were destroyed and at least 1,000 people were evacuated in Friday's Moluccan earthquake, officials said Sunday, raising fears of a possible high death toll.

But poor communications meant that more than 48 hours after the quake, the extent of destruction remained unclear.

Officials close to the affected areas put the death toll at two from the quake on the remote Moluccan island of Halmahera, with dozens of people injured. Other accounts said eight people had died.

But the information on fal-

len buildings and evacuations reaching officials in this island town off the coast of Halmahera suggested the figure could be much higher.

"I think it was very bad. Some people don't want to give the true figures or maybe they just don't know," an official in Manado, on the island of Sulawesi and 280 west of Halmahera, told Reuters.

The quake, measuring 6.8 on the open-ended Richter Scale, was followed by 183 aftershocks, some measuring 4.5 officials in Manado said there were fears of a tidal wave or a volcanic eruption.

Dole holds out carrot and stick on health care

WASHINGTON (R) — Senate Republican leader Bob Dole held out a carrot and a stick on health care reform Saturday, appealing to Republicans to come together on a single plan while threatening to block the Democrats if they refuse to compromise.

The sharp-tongued Republican leader, in a speech to party leaders, also warned that the Democrats would "suffer the consequences" if they persist in blocking congressional hearings on President Bill Clinton's Whitewater financial dealings.

"If the Democrats don't want to have a hearing, they're going to have to suffer the consequences," Sen. Dole said.

Attorney General Janet Reno Thursday appointed an independent counsel, Robert Fiske, to investigate the president's dealings in the failed Whitewater real estate firm while he was Arkansas governor. The president had reluctantly agreed to the appointment.

But Democratic leaders in the House and Senate rejected pleas by Sen. Dole and other Republicans for separate congressional hearings on Whitewater after Congress reconvenes next week following a long holiday recess.

Asked later to explain what "consequences" he was refer-

ring to Sen. Dole told reporters he simply meant that his party would be informing voters during the fall elections campaign about what the Democrats had done.

Sen. Dole spoke on the final day of a three-day party meeting planning campaign strategy for the 1994 elections. Up for grabs on Nov. 8 will be all 435 House seats, 34 of 100 Senate seats and 36 of state governorships.

Party leaders attending the meeting here have expressed cautious optimism that the Republicans will make healthy gains in both the House and Senate in November, and many said they held out a slim hope they can win enough seats in the Senate to take control of the chamber.

Sen. Dole, who would become majority leader if Republicans gain seven or more Senate seats and who is considering running for president in 1996, said Republicans were in a good position in the Senate this year although they are in the minority.

"As long as 41 Republicans stick together, they (the Democrats) can't pass legislation," he said. Forty-four of the 100 senators are Republicans, but under Senate rules just 41 lawmakers can block Senate action.



Telly Savalas

Actor Telly Savalas dies at 70

LOS ANGELES (R) — Telly Savalas, best known as the wise-cracking, lollipop-sucking homicide detective in the 1970s television series *Kojak*, died Saturday of prostate cancer. He was 70.

Savalas died with his family at his side in the suite at the Sheraton-Universal Hotel, where he had been living as his condition worsened, a family spokesman said.

Friends said the bald actor was as fearless in his final days as the street-wise New York cop he once played, keeping his illness a secret until word leaked out two weeks ago.

"He just didn't want to burden people with what he was going through," his publicist, Mike Mamakos, said.

Even though Savalas had many roles in television and film — earning a Best Supporting Actor Oscar nomination in 1962 for *Birdman of Alcatraz* — it was the CBS series *Kojak* that made him a star.

He was the one and only actor to play Lieutenant Theo Kojak in the series, which ran from 1973 to 1978, and overseas re-runs made his trademark line "who loves ya, baby?" famous worldwide.

But Savalas always insisted he didn't mind being typecast. "I made 60 movies before *Kojak* with some of the biggest names in the business, and people would still say, 'there goes what's-his-name,'" he once told an interviewer.

Savalas was married three times and had six children.

The Greek-American actor had no formal theatre training and fell into acting by accident in his 30s after stints working for the government and in television news.

He kept the bald look for *The Dirty Dozen*, in 1967 and went on to appear in *The Battle of the Bulge*, the James Bond film *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*, *Genesis*, *Khan*, *Kelly's Heroes*, *Beyond the Poseidon Adventure* and *The Muppet Movie*.

With his stocky build and menacing grin, Savalas mostly portrayed loathsome villains as his career took off in the 1960s.

But when the *Kojak* role came his way, he had a chance to play a heroic crime fighter — with warts and all. He won Emmy Awards in 1974 and 1976 as well as praise from police nationwide for his realistic portrayal of detective work.

Declared a Time magazine review of the series: "*Kojak* shows New York City in all its roach and racketeering misery... but ultimately the show is a one-man operation."

That man was Savalas, whose portrayal of a cynical lollipop-loving detective who was prepared to bend the rules was the pinnacle of his acting career.

Unlike Columbo a rival detective show at the time starring a milquetoast Peter Falk in a rumpled raincoat, Savalas' *Kojak* wore three-piece suits, was outspoken and was not above stretching the literal interpretation of the law in order to crack a case.

The supporting role in *Kojak* of detective Stavros was played by Savalas' brother George.

Savalas was born Aristotle Savalas in Garden City, New York, on Long Island. He described his father, Nicholas Constantine, as "a millionaire five times and a pauper six," while his mother, Christina, was a former Miss Greece.

After studying at Columbia University, he enlisted in the armed forces in World War II and was wounded in action, winning a Purple Heart.

After the war, he landed a job with the U.S. State Department's Information Service and rose to become assistant director for the Near East, South Asia and Africa.

Besides being nominated for *Birdman of Alcatraz*, Savalas played Pontius Pilate in *The Greatest Story Ever Told*.

Former beauty queen 'had affair with Clinton'

LONDON (AFP) — A former beauty queen has said she had a five-month affair with U.S. President Bill Clinton back in 1983 and was threatened unless she kept quiet about the liaison during the 1992 presidential election campaign. Sally Miller Perdue, 35, told the British weekly the Sunday Telegraph that Mr. Clinton visited her home 12 times between August and December 1983 when he was governor of Arkansas. The former Miss Arkansas told the paper that during Mr. Clinton's presidential campaign she was threatened by a man who claimed to be speaking on behalf of Democrats in high places — not to talk about their liaison. She alleged that if she agreed to behave as a "good little girl" she would be set up for life with a federal job and a regular monthly pay check. "If I didn't take the offer, then they knew that I went jogging by myself and couldn't guarantee what would happen to my pretty little legs. Things just wouldn't be so much fun for me any more. Life would get hard," she was quoted as telling the Sunday Telegraph.

A Clinton aide stressed during the presidential campaign that Mr. Clinton had denied knowing Ms. Perdue. The paper said the White House last week would not reply to requests for comment.

After Ms. Perdue — a divorcee — turned down the offer she lost her job at Lindenwood College in Missouri, had her car damaged and received anonymous telephone calls and hate mail, the paper reported.

The Sunday Telegraph said the allegations had been reported to the FBI, which said it could not comment on an "ongoing investigation." Ms. Perdue also alleged that Mr. Clinton used Arkansas state troopers on security detail at the governor's mansion in Little Rock to drive him to illicit meetings at her home.

For sale — bunker with a view

LONDON (R) — With the cold war over, Britain's Defence Ministry has put 21 underground bunkers up for sale, euphemistically calling them "small country estates with a view." The bunkers, measuring 15 by 3.5 feet (4.5 by 1.0 metre) were constructed to be manned by soldiers in the event of nuclear war. Now ministry officials say the bunkers could make ideal wine cellars, bases for camping or even an ultra-quiet country retreat. Many are situated in areas of natural beauty with lovely views, they said.

Settlement being negotiated in Jackson Case

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Superstar Michael Jackson is negotiating in an effort to settle a sexual abuse lawsuit filed by a 14-year-old boy, a report said Saturday. Time magazine quoted sources close to Jackson as saying they want to settle the allegations out of court to avert additional publicity and that a deal might be reached as early as next week. Several other reports suggested Jackson might be moving toward settling the lawsuit, which alleges he molested the boy during a five-month relationship. The London tabloid Today said Jackson might pay up to \$49 million to settle the case, but the singer's attorneys denied the report. Time said its sources estimated the settlement to be closer to \$5 million, and would require the boy to remain silent about the allegations.

Romeo And Juliet headmistress may lose job

LONDON (R) — A school headmistress who prevented pupils seeing Shakespeare's *Romeo And Juliet* because she deemed it "blatantly heterosexual" fought for her job Saturday after the disclosure she lives with a woman who helped to appoint her. Education chiefs in the East London district of Hackney said they were investigating a possible conflict of interest in the appointment of Jane Brown, 36, as headmistress of a local school for under 11-year-olds. "If at the end of my investigations I find a prima facie case exists, I will be recommending to the chair of governors that he suspends her," Education Director Gus John said. The investigation follows newspaper reports that Ms. Brown was sharing a house with Nicki Thorogood and her three children and that Ms. Thorogood was acting chairperson of the school's governors when Ms. Brown was appointed headmistress two years ago.

Rain threatens more misery for quake victims

LOS ANGELES (R) — Rain threatened to bring more misery Sunday to thousands of earthquake victims living in cars, tents and makeshift camps while authorities promised to streamline the way disaster relief is delivered.

Forecasters said the region could receive up to an inch of rain, making conditions cold and damp for people who have been living outside since Monday's pre-dawn earthquake that measured 6.6 on the open-ended Richter Scale.

National Guard troops toiled at top speed to erect military-style tents at six locations where quake victims were living without adequate provisions or sanitation.

The quake killed at least 55 people and caused up to \$30 billion in damage. It also left 25,000 people homeless and threw thousands out of work as commercial buildings collapsed, forcing businesses to close. The quake also injured more than 7,800 people, 1,300 of them seriously.

Officials estimated it would take up to a year to repair buckled freeways, the economic lifeline of the region.

The tents going up are equipped with army field kitchens, as well as toilets, showers and electricity, cots and sleeping bags were also provided. Getting out of the makeshift

tents that offer little or no protection is the first step toward regaining normal lives, said Housing Secretary Henry Cisneros.

"It's a way to plug the search for permanent housing. Out here in the park by themselves no one's going to come look for them," Ms. Cisneros said. The new tents were expected to be able to house up to 14,000 people.

The problem, officials said, was that many victims refused to go to Red Cross shelters that were opened immediately, fearing that the roofs might cave in on them. In some cases, illegal immigrants were reluctant to register with the

Red Cross because they were afraid of being deported.

"These are people who are frightened and we are not going to force them (into the shelters) at bayonet point," Governor Pete Wilson told Cable News Network.

National Guard officers said they were told to be prepared to maintain the camps for up to two weeks, but some local politicians worried the tent cities might be around far longer and drive away business.

At disaster relief centers set up by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which coordinates relief efforts, victims continued to sign up for help.

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In a detailed review of major foreign policy problems confronting the Clinton administration, Mr. Bush was most critical of the approach to Haiti and Bosnia.

Recalling the administration's decision last Oct. 12 to withdraw a navy troop landing ship from Haiti after a small band of armed thugs threatened to resist it, Mr. Bush said the incident was "devastating, sent a horrible signal," to the world.

"When you send a U.S. ship loaded with military personnel to go ashore, you don't say, 'they're going ashore,' unless you mean it," Mr. Bush said. "And you don't get turned back by a group of thugs stand-

Bush blames Clinton aides for foreign policy failures

WASHINGTON (AP) — One year out of office, George Bush said President Bill Clinton's top foreign policy aides — more than Mr. Clinton himself — are to blame for U.S. setbacks in Somalia, Haiti and Bosnia.

While he only mildly criticized Mr. Clinton, Mr. Bush lambasted some of his former Democratic opponents in Congress, particularly Senate majority leader George Mitchell of Maine and House majority leader Richard Gephardt of Missouri.

Mr. Bush said he's not ready to start writing his memoirs, is working with his wife, Barbara, on health care issues, and has concluded that he lost the 1992 election mainly because, "I just wasn't a good enough communicator."

He complained of media-created "myths" that gave voters a mistaken impression that he was out of touch with mainstream America. And he said he was surprised to discover after moving to Houston that "I don't miss the politics a bit."

Mr. Bush said it was too

early to grade Clinton's overall performance on foreign policy. But he said the president's aides were mostly to blame for an ill-disciplined, "start-and-stop" approach that was harming America's standing in the world.

"They're good people generally, but there doesn't seem to be any structure to their policy," Mr. Bush said in the interview with Washingtonian magazine.

"I think President Clinton tries to do too much all by himself, but he needs first-class support" from his National Security Council and at the State and Defence Departments, he said.

Mr. Bush didn't mention any Clinton aides by name but he suggested outgoing Defence Secretary Les Aspin was among the weak links.

The interview was conducted by Victor Gold, a friend and former Bush speechwriter, on Dec. 13, three days before Mr. Aspin announced his plan to resign. Mr. Gold said he briefly rein-

terviewed Mr. Bush a short time later on Mr. Aspin.

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ing on the dock."

Mr. Bush credited Mr. Clinton with deft handling of relations with Russia but said that on Bosnia he exhibited a "start-and-stop pattern" of first threatening to use force to end the fighting and then backing away when European allies balked.

"They backed away from their bluster, but not without sending the unfortunate impression of a weak and inconsistent U.S. leadership to the world," he said.

Mr. Bush aimed his harshest comments at Mitchell, the Senate Democratic leader.

"Mitchell's purpose, his goal, was simply to bring my presidency down, and to some degree he deserves credit for that," Mr. Bush said.

Mr. Bush praised House Speaker Thomas Foley, D-Wash., for being partisan "in the best sense of the word," but said Mr. Gephardt gave a "biting, personal edge" to his political attacks and, like Sen. Mitchell, was unwilling to work with Republicans.

Spielberg gets Golden Globes for Schindler's List

LOS ANGELES (R) — Steven Spielberg won the recognition for his work that has so long eluded him when he received the Hollywood Foreign Press Association's 51st annual Golden Globe Award for best director.

Schindler's List, a Universal Pictures epic in black and

white telling the true story of a German industrialist who saved thousands of Jews from death in Nazi concentration camps, garnered him the honour where his like Jurassic Park, Star Wars and ET failed. It also was named best dramatic movie and best screenplay, written by Steven Zaillian.

Despite being the most commercially successful director in Hollywood's history, Spielberg has yet to win the coveted Academy of Motion Picture of Arts and Sciences Oscar.

The Globes have gained attention in recent years, serving as a harbinger for the Oscars, the industry's most prized awards, which are due to be presented on March 21.

"As the Globes gain respect and become better known to the cinema-going public, they are becoming more and more financially important," said one studio executive recently.

The star-packed audience at Los Angeles' Beverly Hilton Hotel included Spielberg, Tom Hanks, Robin Williams, Winona Ryder, Emma Thompson, Michelle Pfeiffer and Anthony Hopkins.

Holly Hunter won Best Dramatic Actress for her part as a deaf mute in *The Piano*, a touching, offbeat love story set in 19th-century New Zealand, while Tom Hanks was named Best Actor for Philadelphia, which dramatised the AIDS crisis.

Winona Ryder won Best Supporting Actress for *The Age of Innocence*, and Tommy Lee Jones was named best supporting actor for his part in *The Fugitive*.

Mrs. Doubtfire, starring Robin Williams, won for best

musical or comedy. Williams, who played the part of a man who pretends to be a woman housekeeper, won Best Comedy Actor for Mrs. Doubtfire.

Presenters Faye Dunaway and Tim Curry paid respects to the memories of victims of this week's Los Angeles earthquake, which killed 55 people.

The Hollywood Foreign Press Association, which today has 87 members who are mainly free-lance journalists writing for foreign publications, started the Golden Globe Awards 51 years ago. But it was not until the late 1980s that Hollywood and U.S. media started to accept them as legitimate honours.

The association was for many years a standing joke in Hollywood. Its members were said to be starstruck freelancers, most of whom were not full-time journalists and some of whom were not journalists at all. Some admitted to being cab drivers and others said they owned or worked in boutiques.

The movie industry this year asked the association to move the nomination announcements, traditionally made on the last Wednesday of the year, forward by one week so that studios could cash in on the publicity during the week between Christmas and New Year's, traditionally a box



Actress Holly Hunter holds the Golden Globe award she won for Best Actress in a Drama for her role in *The Piano* (AFP photo)

office bonanza.

Best TV series was *Seinfeld* and its star, Jerry Seinfeld, was named Best TV Comedy Actor, while Best TV Series Supporting Actress was Julia Louis Dreyfus, from the same show. Best TV Comedy Actress was Helen Hunt of *Mad About You*. Best Supporting TV Series Actor was Beau Bridges for *The Positively True Adventures of the Alleged Texas Cheerleader-*

Murdering Mom.

Barbarians At The Gate was Best TV Miniseries or movie. Angela Bassett won for Best Musical Movie Actress in *What's Love Got To Do With It?*, the life story of rock star Tina Turner.

The cast of Robert Altman's *Short Cuts* won a special tribute to the cast award.

Farwell My Concubine, made in Hong Kong, won Best Foreign Language Film.



Director Steven Spielberg smiles as he holds the Golden Globe won for his direction of the film *Schindler's List* (AFP photo)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Anand defeats Yusupov

WUK, AAN ZEE, The Netherlands (AFP) — Viswanathan Anand of India scored a third victory against the Russian-born Arthur Yusupov of Germany in the fifth round of the World Chess Championships here. Anand increased his score to 3.5 points against Yusupov's 1.5. Dutch grand master Jan Timman also won the fifth round of his match against Joel Lautier of France, bringing his score to three points to Lautier's two. Timman, playing white, has improved his game since the second round, when he lost against Lautier, and has fought back to gain a strong advantage, with three games still to play. After the five rounds Russian Valery Salov is leading his countryman Alexander Khalifman by four points to one and needs only half a point to knock his opponent out of the contest.

Weissflog breaks record on Japanese hill

SAPPORO, Japan (AFP) — Jens Weissflog of Germany continued to dominate the World Cup Ski Jumping events here Sunday with a record 125.0-metre leap off the Okurayama large hill. Weissflog, who clinched an easy victory here Saturday, earned 253.4 points with another solid jump of 118.0m, on the second leg for his fifth world cup win this season. "I did not expect that I could do it," Weissflog said after breaking the course record set a year ago by Kenji Suda of Japan. And crediting "good conditions, good winds and a little bit of luck" during the two-day competition. The victory proved the 1984 Olympic gold medalist, who also broke a hill record last month at Oberstdorf, Germany, was ready to make a medal charge at the Lillehammer Winter Olympic games starting Feb. 12. But despite his current success, the German ace repeated that he would retire after the season. World cup leader Espen Bredesen of Norway finished second for 244.0 points with jumps of 115.0 and 120.0m, compared with his ninth spot at the previous event on Saturday.

Brazilian wins Miami Mile

MIAMI, Florida (AFP) — Brazil's Edgar Martins de Oliveira won the Miami Mile here Saturday in 4 minutes 01.0 seconds, edging out Poland's Michal Bartoszak and American Steve Scott for the men's elite title. Bartoszak was six-tenths of a second off the pace and Scott a full second behind the winner. Kenya's Joao N'Tyamba (4:02.3) was fourth and England's Paul Freary (4:02.6) was fifth. In the women's race, Canada's Angela Chalmers won in 4:33.9 with American Suzy Hamilton second in 4:36.3 and Canadian Paula Schnurr third in 4:37.8. The legends race, featuring past top milers in staggered starts based on handicap, ended in a tie between Kenya's Kip Keino and American Mary Liquori in 5:23.6. New Zealand's Peter Snell was third with England's Steve Cram fourth.

Ben Johnson's doctor indicted

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — The doctor who gave Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson the steroids that cost him an Olympic gold medal has been accused in a federal indictment of selling illegal steroids in Florida. Jamie Astaphan, 48, a native of the Caribbean island of St. Kitts who has a medical practice in Toronto, was charged in the indictment unsealed Friday with selling more than 11 pounds (5 kilograms) of steroids laced with cocaine to undercover agents for \$30,000 in Florida during August 1991. Authorities had been trying to extradite Astaphan since last year. He was arrested Jan. 8 when his flight from the Antigua to Canada was diverted to New York City because of bad weather. Since his arrest, he has pleaded innocent to a companion federal indictment in Buffalo, N.Y., charging him with selling 1,300 vials of steroids for \$44,000 to undercover agents who posed as the owners of a Florida chain of physical fitness centres.

Loughran keeps crown

BELFAST (AFP) — Irishman Eamonn Loughran hung on to his World Boxing Organisation (WBO) welterweight title here in the early hours of Sunday morning by a unanimous points decision against Italian Alessandro Duran. In a brawl of a fight the 23-year-old champion always had too much power for Duran, although the Italian's jab caused Loughran the odd problem. The 28-year-old challenger was shaken by a left from Loughran in the third round and a right in the seventh, but the punch that worried him most of all came after the bell at the end of round eight. The champion was fortunate to escape a censure and eventually capitalised to cruise home by wide margins on all three judges' cards. Indeed, American referee Ron Lipton had to halt the final round for the doctor to inspect a nasty cut above Duran's right eye before allowing the Italian to continue. Loughran commented: "It was a scrappy fight. He was a bit of a spoiler. He tried to upset my plans, but I came through and boxed very well. At no time did he hurt me."

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
TAMMAM HIRSH
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SMOKE SCREEN!

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ 7 6 5 2
♥ 9 3
♦ K J 10 6 4
♣ 8 7

EAST
♠ 9 3
♥ K Q 8 6 3
♦ A J 10 5
♣ 10

WEST
♠ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3
♥ A Q J 10 8 2
♦ A 7 4 2
♣ A 2

THE BIDDING:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 NT Pass
2 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ 3 ♠
3 ♠ Pass 4 ♠ Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Two of ♠
Skilled cardplayers are masters of illusion. They paint a false picture of their hand, not always being sure just where it's going to lead. The results can be dramatic, as this deal from a major pairs event shows.

North's one-pump trump response to the major-suit opening was forcing. With extra values, South chose

Champions Denmark dismayed by another Spanish challenge

MANCHESTER, England (R) — Holders Denmark were left dismayed by the draw for the 1996 European Championship which set up another major confrontation with Spain, opponents who have consistently destroyed Danish soccer dreams.

Coach Richard Moeller Nielsen, who guided Denmark to a fairytale triumph in Sweden in 1992, was stunned by his group two opponents in Saturday's eight-group draw for the qualifying rounds.

"I would rather have met any other team than Spain," he said. "It's a chance to get our revenge though."

"But with Belgium the third seeds, it's a very tough group and the top three teams will take points off each other."

Only two months ago a single goal in Seville saw Spain beat the Danes and deny them a place in this year's World Cup finals.

In 1984, Spain triumphed in their European Championship semifinal on penalties, beat Denmark again in the opening match of the 1988 finals in Germany and ended the Danes' scintillating progress

through the 1986 World Cup finals in Mexico.

After the pressure of playing their last game of the World Cup qualifiers in the intimidating atmosphere of Seville in November, Moeller Nielsen is determined that Denmark's last game of the Euro '96 qualifiers should be in Copenhagen. The nations must thrash out their playing schedule by September.

Denmark's Barcelona star Michael Laudrup was equally dismayed. "Oh no. Could that really be true, Spain once again?" he said when the news was broken to him. "We must avoid having a deciding match in Spain or Belgium this time."

Former champions the Netherlands were also thrown in again with World Cup qualifying opponents when drawn against Norway, who took three out of four points off them.

France, champions in 1984, also drew tough opposition in Romania, Poland and Israel. Whose shock 3-2 win in Paris effectively cost them their place in USA '94.

Hosts England, staging an

enlarged tournament after UEFA doubled the finalists to 16, are relishing the possibility of all four British sides qualifying for the first time.

Tournament director Glen Kirtson said: "(It) would be great for the fans, especially as no other British teams were in the World Cup finals in England in 1966."

Scotland were drawn with Greece and Russia — foes in the 1994 World Cup qualifying campaign — plus Finland and minnows the Faroe Islands and San Marino.

Wales play world champions Germany, in a repeat of their unsuccessful 1992 European Championship qualifying experience, Bulgaria, Albania and debutants Georgia and Moldova.

Northern Ireland have been pitched again with arch-rivals Ireland, as in the last World Cup qualifiers, in a tough group which features Portugal, Austria, Latvia and Liechtenstein.

The draw was swelled to a record 47 teams after the admission of 16 new nations following the break-up of Eastern European states.

Harding skates on as grand jury deliberates

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Three weeks before the start of the Winter Olympics, the question of whether Tonya Harding will be allowed to compete in the most glamorous event at Lillehammer is as great a mystery as her role in the attack on Nancy Kerrigan.

Her berth on the team, seemingly secured two weeks ago when she won the national championships, is in the hands of the U.S. Figure Skating Association, the U.S. Olympic Committee and the International Olympic Committee.

Their decision hinges on the report of a seven-member grand jury trying to sort out all the testimony and pieces of evidence gathered in the alleged conspiracy against Kerrigan. That report is due by Feb. 3.

As everyone waits, Harding skates, thrilling her fans with triple jumps at a shopping mall ice rink. She may be barred from the Olympics, she may be indicted, but right now she cannot afford to stop skating and fret about her future.

She's 23 and she's been skating for 20 years, too long to quit even under the pressure of this investigation.

And it has been a brutal time for Harding, still not charged with any crime.

From the moment she stepped off the airplane in Portland after winning the nationals in Detroit, Harding has been denying accusations that she knew about the plot, encouraged it, and tried to cover it up.

All the accusations have been coming from Shawn Eckardt, her one-time bodyguard. Eckardt's confession provided the basis for a warrant against Harding's ex-husband, Jeff Gillooly, with whom she had reconciled since their divorce last August.

But if the authorities believed Eckardt enough to arrest Gillooly, why did they not arrest Harding over similar allegations? Prosecutors won't say, insisting they are still investigating.

Asked if there was anything to show Harding was involved other than Eckardt's word, his lawyer, W. Mark McKnight, said:

"We're working on that. We're very much aware of the fact that his credibility is at issue, and corroborating facts are going to be necessary or he'll be torn apart."

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Samaranch begins 3rd term

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (AP) — Look who's still running the show.

When the Winter Games open in Lillehammer on Feb. 12, Juan Antonio Samaranch will be presiding over his eighth Olympics.

After 13 years in the job, the 73-year-old Spaniard shows no sign of slowing down as he starts his third — and presumably final — term as president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

"I am like a very old car, no?" he said. "But I am still going very fast. If you look at my agenda for this year, it's crazy."

Since his election in 1980, Samaranch has guided the IOC through probably the greatest period of change in its 100-year existence. Re-elected by acclamation in September, he looks set to keep up the pace over the next four years.

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Sampras eliminates Lendl as Graf, Sabatini advance

MELBOURNE (AP) — Pete Sampras slammed down 19 aces and hit searing forehands with radar precision to beat two-time champion Ivan Lendl in straight sets Sunday and power his way into the quarter-finals of the Australian Open.

The top-seeded Sampras, seeking his third straight Grand Slam title, was too direct and consistent for 33-year-old veteran Lendl, winning 7-6 (7-5), 6-2, 7-6 (7-4) in 2 hours, 19 minutes.

Sampras now will face fleet-footed, athletic no. 10 seed Magnus Gustafsson of Sweden, a 2-6, 6-3, 6-1, 6-1 winner over unseeded Czech player Martin Damm.

Defending champion Jim Courier, bidding for his third straight Australian Open title, bludgeoned his way to a 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 victory over no. 13 Wayne Ferreira of South Africa.

Three-time champion Steffi Graf, Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, Gabriela Sabatini and Conchita Martinez all advanced to the last eight of the women's singles.

Sampras, 22, already the Wimbledon and U.S. Open champion, was in superb form against 15th seed Lendl, who was one of his teen idols.

"Ivan will go down as one of the greatest of all time," Sampras said. "I used to be in awe of him."

Sampras started slowly and trailed 1-4 in the third set before rallying to repeat his victory over Lendl in last week's New South Wales Open final in Sydney.

"It was a close match today. A couple of points here and there and he could have won," Sampras said.

Sampras was nonetheless pleased with his form.

"I think that was the best match of the tournament for me," he said.

Lendl found some solace in his improved form after a disastrous 1993, but added: "You can't be happy if you lose."

"I hit the ball ok, but Pete played better on the big points," said the former world no. 1. "I'm still trying to get my game together and you have to walk properly before you can try to run."

Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia, the no. 5 seed, was the first man to advance to the quarter-finals, saying he felt "very confident" for his next match with Courier.



Gabriela Sabatini

The powerful left-hander defeated unseeded South African Grant Stafford 6-3, 6-2, 7-6 (7-3) in less than two hours, equaling his previous best performance at the tournament. He last made the quarters in 1989.

Ivanisevic served 16 aces, bringing his total for the tournament to 66.

Graf earlier scored her fourth successive straight-set victory, downing Sandrine Testud 6-1, 6-2 to advance to the women's quarter-finals.

Graf is seeking her fourth Australian Open championship and her fourth straight title in a Grand Slam tournament.

The 24-year-old German overwhelmed her French opponent with her power and pace. She now will face 17-year-old American Lindsay Davenport, a 6-2, 6-7 (4-7), 6-2 winner over no. 6 seed Mary Joe Fernandez.

Rookie Pro Davenport, the no. 16 seed, squandered four match points in the second set against two-time finalist Fernandez, but recovered her composure.

No. 4 seed Sabatini of Argentina beat no. 9 Mary Pierce of France 6-3, 6-3 in a match that was far closer than the score suggests.

The score suggests.

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The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Ministry of Supply, announces the delay for the opening of the tender for consulting engineering services for expansion of existing silos in Irbid, which was set to be on the 31/1/1994. The new date would be the 15/2/1994.

All qualified international consulting engineering firms that bought the IFB are requested to contact Ministry of Supply to be handed the addendum No. 1.

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NEW IN BRIEF

Israeli Arabs ask to meet Assad

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli Arab politicians, trying to prise open ties with Arab states, want to visit Syria to pay condolence to President Hafez Al Assad on the death of his son, one of the Arab Democratic Party, said he asked Egypt's em. in Israel to pass on the request on Saturday and would appeal to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to intervene. Arab mayors of towns in Israel have sent condolences to Mr. Assad, whose son Basil died in a car crash on Friday. "We hope to pay our respects to President Assad and at the same time strengthen our ties with the Arab Nation, of which we are a part," Mr. Darawshe told Reuters. Israel has 800,000 Arab citizens and their representatives are waging a campaign of acceptance among Arab states which have long excluded them. Delegations have visited Jordan and PLO headquarters in Tunisia in the past. Israeli Arabs can also visit Egypt and make pilgrimages to Muslim holy sites in Saudi Arabia.

Bomb kills Israeli-affiliated militiaman

MARIJAYOUN (AP) — A roadside bomb exploded near a patrol of the Israeli-affiliated South Lebanon Army militia Sunday, killing a militiaman, security sources said. The source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the bomb went off at midday (1000 GMT) as the patrol was passing near the Houla crossing, one of five gateways into Israel's self-styled "security zone." There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack.

Australia warned of Indonesian nuclear crisis

CANBERRA (R) — Australia's conservative opposition urged the government Sunday to prepare for a nuclear emergency if neighbouring Indonesia, described as geologically unstable, goes ahead with a nuclear power plant. "Australia should have some idea about the extent of the effect on Australia of a nuclear accident in Indonesia," said opposition spokeswoman Chris Gallus as she called for an environmental impact assessment. "Australia must have an action plan in case of such an accident," she said in a statement. Indonesia said on Thursday it was considering whether or not to build a 600-megawatt nuclear power plant in Java after a Japanese engineering firm said last month that the project was feasible. Critics say Indonesia's geological instability makes nuclear reactors a high risk, especially in Java, the country's most densely populated region.

56 journalists reported killed in 1993

NEW YORK (AP) — Fifty-six journalists died while working in 1993, with more killed in Algeria, Bosnia, Somalia and in former Soviet republics than in any other countries, the Committee to Protect Journalists said. "What is striking about both Algeria and (formerly Soviet) Tajikistan is that the attacks on journalists are symptoms of enormous political upheavals which have been largely ignored by the Western press," William Orme, the committee's executive director, said in a statement released Sunday. The committee compiled a list of those killed in each country, totaling 56, plus a list of 16 others whose deaths are being investigated. Fewer reporters were killed in 1993 than the record 61 who died in 1991, but more died than in 1992. In that year, the committee reported that 49 journalists were killed or presumed dead worldwide. Most of this year's victims were local residents working for local and international news organisations, the New York-based committee said. In many cases, the reporters were targeted for assassination by ethnic, religious and nationalist extremists.

Talks begin on repatriation of Eritreans

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Talks have begun here for the voluntary repatriation of Eritrean refugees numbering over half a million in Sudan. The Eritrean commissioner for refugees arrived here Saturday to discuss arrangements for the repatriation operation with the Sudanese officials concerned as well as the representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) here. On his arrival the envoy went straight into a meeting with Sudanese Minister of State for Refugees Abdul Rahman Siral Khatim. The Eritrean official said in a statement carried by the Sudan News Agency (SUNA) that Eritrea had made "thorough" preparations to receive the returning refugees.

Iran deputy backs disgraced cleric

TEHRAN (AFP) — A member of Iran's parliament Sunday backed Ayatollah Hussein Ali Montazeri, now disgraced for his opposition to the government, as a religious figure and called on Tehran to stop the negative campaign against him. Hassan Mokhtari, a representative from Ayatollah Montazeri's hometown of Najafabad in the central province of Esfahan, said his constituency was interested in following Ayatollah Montazeri as a marja-e-taqlid, the highest source of reference for Shi'ite Muslims. Mr. Mokhtari criticised the negative campaign underway against Ayatollah Montazeri, once the heir to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini as Iran's spiritual leader, and called on the authorities to stop it. It was the first time in two years that the possibility of Ayatollah Montazeri serving as the Shi'ite leader was raised by a parliamentarian in public. In November 1992, former deputy Morteza Alviri said 80 to 100 deputies in the 270-seat parliament favoured having the ayatollah as the leader.

3 Iraqis float across Dead Sea into Israel

TEL AVIV (AP) — Three Iraqis requesting political asylum in Israel floated across the Dead Sea from Jordan last week and are now being questioned by police, a newspaper reported Sunday. It was the second group of Iraqis to infiltrate Israel in a week. Iraqi citizens who oppose President Saddam Hussein periodically seek asylum from Israel. The daily Haaretz said the three Iraqis, Salah Ben, 39, Ismail Ben, 39, and Bassam Vataiyir, 27 crossed the Dead Sea from Jordan in tyres they surrendered to soldiers who turned them over to police. They are now being held in an Israeli jail for questioning, the daily said.

Kurdish leader in France arrested

PARIS (AFP) — French authorities have placed under house arrest a Kurdish leader and are planning to expel him despite his assertion that his political actions are legal, an anti-racism group said here Saturday. The Movement Against Racism and for Friendship between People said Azad Dere had been questioned by police in Paris on Thursday and then ordered to remain at home in the South of France. Interior Minister Charles Pasqua signed an expulsion order for Mr. Azad Dere on Dec. 30 as part of a Europe-wide crackdown on Kurdish activists. Mr. Dere told AFP by telephone he had been detained while acting as an interpreter for a visiting Kurdish delegation. "My activities in France are perfectly legal," he said. "I have a resident's permit that is valid until 2003." Police have placed him under house arrest "until they can find a country that will accept him after his expulsion from France," he said, adding that the expulsion order was a result of pressure from the Turkish government.

38 arrested in southern Egypt

ASSIUT, Egypt (R) — Egyptian security forces arrested 38 people in the southern town of Assiut Sunday as part of a sweep against suspected militants, the national security chief said. General Nasser Zaher said the campaign would also target the towns of Badari and Dayrut and militant mountain hideouts in the south of the country. Seventeen policemen were killed last month in Assiut, a focus of Muslim fundamentalist unrest where serious armed conflict broke out in March 1992.



YOUNG VICTIMS: The bodies of five of the six children killed by a shell while playing in fresh snow in Sarajevo Saturday (see page 8) are laid out in a morgue. The decapitated body of the sixth child was in another morgue (AFP photo)

Klestil ponders mistress or job

VIENNA (R) — Austrian President Thomas Klestil, coming under pressure to choose between his mistress and his job, promised Sunday to sort out his personal problems and end a mounting scandal without delay.

Mr. Klestil's wife, Edith, left him earlier this month because of his relationship with foreign ministry official Margot Loeffler, an aide whose duties brought her close to the president.

"My private problems have not become easier," he told Sunday's mass-circulation Neue Kronen Zeitung. "But it's in my very own best interest to solve them quickly."

Mr. Klestil, a suave 61-year-old career diplomat allied to the Conservative People's Party (OEPF), was elected president in 1992, replacing Kurt Waldheim.

Rumours of a split between Austria's president and first lady were kept under wraps by an unusually restrained tabloid press until Mr. Klestil admitted last week that his wife had moved out after 37 years of marriage.

A day later, photographs of Ms. Loeffler were splashed across front pages and state-run television, reluctantly, took up the story of his affair.

Now, with wild reports of a "lovestruck" in the federal presidency office for military emergencies, the scandal has

become fully blown, with suggestions in the media that Ms. Loeffler be given some foreign embassy post far away from Vienna.

"Thomas Klestil must decide. Either he wants to enjoy private life with his female colleague or continue in office," said OEPF women's group member Maria Gruff at the weekend.

She said Mr. Klestil had won the presidential election by using his wife to portray himself as a happy family man, "which was not true."

"This was a dirty trick to play on the Austrian people," Ms. Gruff said, adding that Mr. Klestil should have resolved his "hormone crisis" with his wife. "Now to not divorce but carry on with the other woman, that's really low down."

Although largely ceremonial, the office of president is highly respected by Austrians. One of Mr. Klestil's promises on taking office was to repair any damage "might have been" to foreign relations by a domestic controversy. He also promised to be candid.

"If I now have problems like many others have, I can only say, the people certainly don't want some plaster saint but a man with normal feelings and weaknesses and vulnerabilities," he told the newspaper.

"These problems have no negative effect on the conduct of my office. My capacities are in no way limited by them," Mr. Klestil added.

Mr. Klestil's mandate lasts another five years. Although his office is politically non-partisan, the scandal is a potential embarrassment to his party in a year which includes state elections, a referendum on joining the European Union, and a general election.

Mr. Klestil's wife Edith, in an interview with Vienna's Der Standard newspaper on Saturday, said the head of state's affair with Ms. Loeffler had become an unbearable embarrassment to her.

Asked how long it had been going on, she said she did not know, but added: "In any case, too long."

"If people talk to me and ask me why I am not seen very often with the president I don't want them to get the impression that I am a lazy person who does not take her duties seriously," she said.

But "you don't simply throw 40 years with your partner into the garbage can," she added. The Klestils have three grown-up children.

Asked if a foreign posting for Ms. Loeffler would resolve the problem, Austria's first lady said: "That is not the only solution to the problem. But it would help."

Rival army factions fight in Lesotho

MASERU (AFP) — Fierce fighting between rival army groups erupted Sunday in the capital of the southern African Kingdom of Lesotho, killing at least two rebel soldiers, a diplomat said.

The clashes erupted shortly after dawn and the diplomat said "ferocious shooting" lasted about 35 minutes, followed by two hours of sporadic gunfire, interspersed by mortar bombs.

The U.S. embassy warned people to vacate the capital, saying further heavy fighting

between the two groups was expected.

Radio broadcasts warned Maseru residents to stay indoors and South African Foreign Minister P. W. Botha warned people not to travel to Maseru because of the fighting between loyal and rebel army troops.

"South Africans are requested not to travel to Maseru and its environs until the situation has returned to normal," Mr. Botha said in a statement Sunday from Pretoria.

At least two rebel soldiers

were killed in Sunday's shoot-out, adding to the two others killed in earlier clashes last week.

The British Foreign Office told its citizens in Lesotho to stay indoors Sunday.

The conflict was apparently sparked by a demand for a 100 per cent pay rise by the rebel soldiers, and diplomats do not believe the uprising is related to dissatisfaction with the six-month-old government of Prime Minister Ntsu Mokhehle.

Death of Assad's son sparks grief and fears for stability

NICOSIA (AFP) — Syrian President Hafez Al Assad buried his eldest son and heir apparent Basil over the weekend as ordinary Syrians and diplomats expressed fears of political instability in Damascus.

His son's death in a car accident in Damascus Friday came less than a week after Bill Clinton and Mr. Assad held a summit in Geneva, where the U.S. president described Syria as "the key" to a full Arab-Israeli peace settlement.

Basil was buried on Saturday in the family's village of Kordaha, northern Syria, in a funeral attended by several Arab leaders as well as 100,000 mourners.

When Mr. Assad arrived at Kordaha airport he appeared composed and urged crowds to be calm, but he later burst into tears at the ceremonies in Naesha Mosque.

"We are very afraid the president will be affected by the tragedy which hit him at a very delicate time in the region," said Assad Yunes, a villager. "But he's a believer. He will survive this."

Mr. Assad, 63, who has had heart problems, has maintained stability in his country with an iron-first during his 24-year rule, and over the last two years he was widely seen as grooming Basil, 31, to be

his successor.

An army major, fine horseman and marksman, Basil was in charge of the elite Republican Guards protecting the Syrian leader.

Mr. Assad has been preparing the succession for several months by giving his son increasing responsibilities, including key issues regarding Lebanon, where Syria maintains 35,000 troops, diplomats said.

Last May he was entrusted with the delicate task of eradicating a major smuggling operation allegedly run by Mr. Assad's eldest brother, Jamil Al Assad, and his allies.

Basil crushed the smuggling activity which centred around the Syrian port of Latakia, in cooperation with the Lebanese authorities across the border in northern Lebanon.

"No one could have done what Basil did in this town. He was the best member of the president's family," Jawdat, a merchant from Latakia, said.

There have been several reports of rivalry between Mr. Assad and members of his family, particularly tension between the Syrian president and his brother Rifaat.

A vice-president and businessman, Rifaat, 55, has always been considered influential and is now likely to

assume even greater importance.

Mr. Assad's brother earned his reputation after he put down an uprising by the Muslim Brotherhood in 1980 and in 1981.

But a series of excesses followed, prompting Mr. Assad to force Rifaat to live in exile in Europe. He was allowed back in Syria two years ago after an eight-year absence.

A Western diplomat in Damascus also said there were concerns about political friction.

He said Basil's death was "not only a blow to the family but also to the regime's stability, and this tragedy can only raise concerns" about the succession.

Mr. Assad takes major political decisions in cooperation with the ruling Baath Party but he depends on members of his own Alawite community, a minority Muslim religious group, for his personal security.

The president's efforts to groom Basil as his heir had apparently silenced voices of dissent in Syria, where a large part of the population was unhappy with the Alawite's grip over power.

But Basil's death now threatens to crush these efforts.

Hekmatyar seeks to pulverise his capital

KABUL (Agencies) — Troops loyal to Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar rained hundreds of rockets on the capital Sunday, battering Kabul with their fiercest assault in a three-week battle.

The barrage blasted residential areas, the presidential palace and the government-run television station. There were no immediate casualty figures.

Mr. Hekmatyar and his ally, warlord Rashid Dostum, began a bloody battle to oust President Burhanuddin Rabbani on New Year's Day.

Afghan sources said warplanes flown by General Dostum's pilots dropped seven bombs Sunday on Wazir Akbar Khan, a residential area where most diplomats, aid organisations and embassies are housed.

There were reports that a bomb hit the Japanese embassy, but there were no casualties. Most embassies, the United Nations and several aid groups evacuated their international staff from Kabul more than a week ago.

Dostum forces bombed positions held by Mr. Rabbani's Jamiat-e-Islami forces in the south of the city, reports said. Blistering rocket and artillery battles between Jamiat-e-Islami and the Hezb-e-Islami of Mr. Hekmatyar broke out at first light.

Gen. Dostum's bombers launched attacks from his headquarters in the northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif on Jamiat-e-Islami positions in villages south of Kabul and on Mr. Rabbani's airbase at Bagram, heavily damaging the runway, reports said.

Independent sources said

Mr. Hekmatyar's forces had made some gains in Sunday's fighting.

The rebel coordination council, of which Hezb-e-Islami is a part, said it would welcome peace and efforts by a team of Islamic scholars from moderate parties to negotiate an end to the battle, in which thousands of civilians have been killed and injured.

"We are ready to agree to a ceasefire...but the other side should also agree," the council said in a statement after a meeting late on Saturday in Peshawar, Pakistan.

"If the other side does not agree we will also continue to fight," it said.

The council warned banks and foreign institutions not to issue money to Mr. Rabbani's government, which it described as illegitimate.

"All those banks of Afghanistan and foreign institutions which have relations with Afghanistan should not give money to the Afghan government or those who say they represent the government because there is no legal government in Afghanistan," it said.

It warned of a strong reaction by the council against any such action by banks or foreign organisations.

At least 8,000 people have been wounded in some of the fiercest fighting since insurgents swept the communist from power in 1992. Some 700 more people have fled the city.

There have been several appeals for a ceasefire. The U.N., Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have asked the warring factions to lay down their weapons.

2 more die in Algeria; conference faces boycott

ALGIERS (Agencies) — Algerian violence claimed two more lives on Sunday as protesters demonstrated against killing and the government made final plans for a national conference in the face of a boycott threat by political parties.

Security officials said a Tunisian national, Raymond Louzoum, a 62-year-old optician who had run a shop in central Algiers for more than 30 years, was murdered by unidentified killers.

They did not give any motive for the crime. The government has blamed armed Islamic extremists for targeting foreigners as part of a guerrilla war against the regime, but it was not clear that Mr. Louzoum had been thus singled out.

An Algiers taxi driver, Rachid Khodja, meanwhile, died from injuries received when his car was sprayed with machinegun fire Jan. 9. That attack was blamed on an armed Islamic group.

Meanwhile, a government commission charged with preparing for a "national consensus conference," met with the High State Council, Algeria's collegiate presidency, two days ahead of the conference's planned start, an official source said.

No details of the outcome were given.

President Ali Kafi called Saturday on political parties to stop their "manoeuvres" and take part in the conference

which is intended to set the scene for a three-year transition from current military-backed rule to general elections.

Algeria's main political parties, the former ruling party, the National Liberation Front (FLN), the Front for Socialist Forces, and the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), have all already said they will not attend the reconciliation conference.

The FLN said it could not agree with "replacing one provisional government with another provisional government."

A FIS boycott declaration Saturday appeared to dash hopes that it might be brought into the mainstream of government moves to plot Algeria's future. Hopes had been raised after recent reports of "positive" contacts between people close to the FIS and the government's national dialogue commission.

Protesters in Laghouat, 400 kilometres south of Algiers and Biskra, 425 kilometres south-east of the capital, called Sunday for an end to the wave of violence that has swept the country, Radio Algiers said. The large crowd carried banners calling for "enough widows and orphans." Demonstrations against violence, and for the rights of Berber people, the original inhabitants of North Africa, were held last week.

Do not recognise Israel — Qadhafi advises Syria

SIRTE, Libya (R) — Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi warned Syria Saturday not to recognise Israel, saying Arabs would rather die than do a land-for-peace deal with the Jewish state.

"The Baath Party which rules Syria and which has held high the pan-Arab banner cannot end up recognising Israel," Colonel Qadhafi said at the opening session of the Libyan people's congress.

"The principle of (trading) land for peace is dangerous," he declared, adding that the confrontation with Israel had to continue "even if it means the death of millions of Arabs."

"We would rather die than accept the land-for-peace principle and recognise Israel," the Libyan leader said.

Syria is officially in a state of war with Israel. But it says it is willing to agree peace with the Jewish state on the basis of United Nations resolutions calling on Israel to give up Arab lands it seized in return for comprehensive peace with its neighbours.

A U.S.-Syrian summit a week ago cleared the way for a resumption of negotiations between Syria and Israel, which hit stalemate over the Golan

Heights seized by Israel in 1967.

Syria demands total Israeli withdrawal. Israel had said it could make a limited pullback but has refused to discuss it until Syria says it means full ties and open borders.

The Israeli side at the negotiations said the summit in Geneva last Sunday had created conditions for a possible breakthrough in the two-year-old talks.

In his address, Colonel Qadhafi also criticised Arab leaders, without naming any, for supporting the wider Middle East peace negotiations being sponsored by Washington.

"I want you to write reports to your leaders telling them that the West is on its way to disintegration just like the former Soviet Union," Col. Qadhafi told Arab ambassadors present.

He also attacked the historic peace accord between the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Israel on Palestinian self rule in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho.

"The Gaza Strip is Egyptian and the West Bank is Jordanian," Col. Qadhafi declared.

COLUMN

Prince Charles to tour Australia

SYDNEY (AP) — Prince Charles arrives for a 12-day official tour Monday but monarchists and republicans doubt he'll influence debate over whether Australia should sever links with the British crown. "We're happy about Charles coming. He's really just another English tourist," said Andrew Johnson, executive director of the Australian Republican Movement. Although thousands lined the street to catch a glimpse of visiting members of Britain's ruling family in the 1950s and 60s, royal tours attract few spectators nowadays. "It's become a bit of a yawn," Mr. Johnson said Sunday. Lloyd Waddy, convener of the pro-constitutional Monarchy group, is also nonplussed. He said the prince's tour will have "particular significance" on the republican issue. Neither side plans demonstrations during the visit. Australia is an independent nation, but like some other former British colonies including Canada and New Zealand, retains Queen Elizabeth as head of state. If the queen dies or steps aside, Charles as her heir will become king of Australia when he is crowned king of England. Prime Minister Paul Keating, who will welcome the prince on arrival at Sydney Airport, wants to declare a republic and replace the British monarch as head of state with an Australian president by 2001. Opinion polls show Australians are divided on the issue with younger people favouring change and older people not.

Model in Koran row protected by bodyguard

BONN (R) — German model Claudia Schiffer is protected by bodyguards since Muslims took offence at a revealing bodice bearing Koranic verses which she wore at a Paris fashion show, a newspaper said Saturday. The report in the mass-circulation Bild quoted Ms. Schiffer's mother Gudrun as saying Claudia was modelling on the Indonesian island of Bali and did not venture on to the street without a bodyguard because of alleged Muslim threats. Bild quoted Muslims in Germany as saying Ms. Schiffer should be punished for parading at the Paris summer collections a week ago in a torso-hugging black bustier on which, Arabic words were embroidered in grey pearls. Harmut Koschky, a member of parliament for the Christian Social Union, sister party of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democrats, told Bild: "We must not accept it when religious fundamentalists threaten to kill Claudia Schiffer. She must get protection like top politicians and other people at risk." The head of France's Muslim community, Daill Boubakeur, said Friday Chanel had erred in sewing Koranic verses on the garment but accepted an apology from the Chanel Fashion House. Chanel, which said it acted in good faith, destroyed the dresses after Muslims in the Indonesian capital Jakarta protested to the German government. Chanel designer Karl Lagerfeld is German.

Reenactment led to Bobbitt acquittal

WASHINGTON (R) — Jurors in the trial of Lorena Bobbitt said their reenactment of the crime led them to acquit the defendant for malicious wounding by reason of insanity, the Washington Post reported Sunday. Holding the same knife she had used to cut off her husband's penis, a male juror played the role of Lorena, the paper said, with John Wayne Bobbitt being represented by a paper cup. "The more we did...we realised that this was not a person who was acting in a sane manner," juror Jeanne Elmore, 42, told the Post. "You could see as we were reading her words, the emotion building." Ms. Elmore was one of five members of the Manassas, Virginia, jury interviewed for the story. The jury — made up of seven women and five men — was not in agreement on exactly when Lorena Bobbitt snapped. The paper reported, however, members were unanimous in believing that Lorena Bobbitt was raped by her 26-year-old husband in the early morning hours of June 23 and then suffered a brief psychotic breakdown brought on by years of abuse.